

Big smiles as public servants receive Dvuladvula

By Thokozani Mazibuko

AFTER weeks of anticipation and growing anxiety, public servants across Eswatini finally began receiving their salary-reviewed pay on Monday, following a government announcement that the disbursement would be delayed until October 27. From as early as 8:30 a.m., civil servants banking with the Eswatini Building Society (EBS) began receiving SMS notifications confirming that their salaries had been deposited.

■ SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

Minister applauds Macmillan’s role in advancing Eswatini’s education

Page 4



▲ Minister of Education and Training Owen Nxumalo in a group picture with Macmillan staff members after touring their premises in Matsapha on Monday.



Proper housing for vulnerable citizens remains King’s top priority — DPM

Page 3



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30
YEARS
of help that works

By Thokozani Mazibuko

Big smiles as public servants receive Dvuladvula

... 15% pay rise hits bank accounts



▲Eswatini Building Society (EBS) branch in Manzini.

AFTER weeks of anticipation and growing anxiety, public servants across Eswatini finally began receiving their salary-reviewed pay on Monday, following a government announcement that the disbursement would be delayed until October 27.

From as early as 8:30 a.m., civil servants banking with the Eswatini Building Society (EBS) began receiving SMS notifications confirming that their salaries had been deposited. By midday, those with Standard Bank and other financial institutions also started receiving their much-awaited payments.

The salary adjustment follows government's 15 percent pay increase for civil servants, a move that was part of the broader cost-of-living adjustment and restructuring of the public wage bill.

Relief and frustration in equal measure

While many public servants expressed relief and joy at finally receiving their enhanced salaries, others voiced disappointment over the delay and questioned whether the increase would be enough to cushion them from rising living costs.

A teacher from the Lubombo region, who preferred anonymity, said the long wait had caused unnecessary stress.

"We were worried because government had earlier announced the delay. Most of us had already made commitments based on the expected date of payment. But we're happy that the money has finally come through," she said.

However, another civil servant from the Ministry of Education and Training shared that although the increase is appreciated, it is quickly overshadowed by high inflation and debt obligations.

"A 15 percent increase looks big on paper, but by the time you settle your loans and basic expenses, there's not much difference," he noted.

Government had earlier in the month issued a statement assuring civil servants that the delay was due to administrative and technical processes linked to the implementation of the new salary structure. The Ministry of Public Service emphasized that the review was part of an ongoing effort to align salaries with current economic realities and to improve morale within the public sector.

The Ministry reiterated that the new salary structure benefits all grades of civil servants, including teachers, nurses, police officers, and other government employees.

The salary adjustment comes at a time when the country is battling economic challenges, with inflation pressures affecting food, fuel, and transport costs. Economists have noted that the pay rise could help boost consumer spending, especially as the festive season approaches.

However, some financial analysts have cautioned that the increase might put additional pressure on government finances if not matched by improved productivity and fiscal discipline.

The mood on the ground

Across the country, the atmosphere was a mix of celebration and cautious optimism. Bank queues were longer than usual as civil servants verified their payments and withdrew funds. Social media platforms were also abuzz, with many public servants sharing screenshots of their salary notifications and messages of relief.

For now, the long-awaited salary adjust-

ment has brought temporary cheer to the country's more than 44,000 government employees. Whether the increase will bring lasting financial comfort remains to be seen, but for many, this payday has brought much-needed relief and restored faith in the government's commitment to its workforce.

It should be noted that this was a major civil service salary review for Eswatini, the first in many years, is being implemented, with Category Three (lower and mid-level) officers receiving 100% of their adjustments starting now. The review, which began with a commission in July 2024, includes potential back-payments and allowances, but requires government funding of approximately E1.6 billion for full implementation. While many civil servants will see improved compensation, the final draft report has led to mixed feelings, as some higher-level positions have been downgraded in the review.

Minister allays fears of further delays, appreciates unions for cooperation

Public servants across the country breathed a sigh of relief on Monday after receiving confirmation that their much-anticipated salaries had been processed, following successful negotiations between government and public sector unions.

Minister of Public Service Mabulala Maseko, speaking during an interview with the Eswatini Broadcasting Service (EBS) on Monday morning, assured the nation that there would be no delay in the payment of civil servants' salaries. His statement came after days of speculation and anxiety among workers who had been uncertain about when their salaries, including the recently reviewed pay, would reflect in their bank accounts.

Maseko confirmed that all public servants would receive their salaries starting from Monday, in line with the government's commitment to honour the 2025 Salary Review Agreement. "I want to assure all civil servants that government has fulfilled its obligation. Salaries have been processed and pay-



▲Minister of Public Service Mabulala Maseko.

ments commenced from yesterday," he said.

The announcement followed intensive deliberations between the Government Negotiations Forum (GNF) and representatives of the Public Sector Unions, which culminated in the signing of a Collective Agreement late Sunday night.

The agreement marks the successful conclusion of the 2025 Salary Review exercise, which had been a key issue of concern among civil servants since the beginning of the financial year.

Addressing the media on Monday morning, Minister Maseko commended both parties for their constructive engagement and willingness to reach common ground in the spirit of partnership and national interest. "We sincerely appreciate the Public Sector Associations for their understanding, patience, and cooperation during this process," he said. "The amicable and positive conclusion of this exercise demonstrates our shared commitment to the welfare of

our workforce and the stability of the public service."

He further highlighted that the review was part of government's broader efforts to improve employee morale and sustain productivity within the public sector. "This outcome reaffirms government's dedication to ensuring that public servants are fairly compensated and motivated to deliver quality service to the people of Eswatini," Maseko added.

Meanwhile, reports from various banks confirmed that salary payments had begun reflecting in public servants' accounts as early as Monday morning. Many workers expressed relief and gratitude after days of uncertainty, describing the development as a "welcome reassurance" of government's reliability.

The successful completion of the salary review and timely payment are expected to boost confidence and morale within the public service as the country moves forward with its economic and social recovery plans.

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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Proper housing for vulnerable citizens remains King's top priority — DPM

PROPER housing for vulnerable citizens, particularly the elderly, continues to be a paramount priority for His Majesty King Mswati III, underscoring the government's commitment to social welfare and community development. This dedication was prominently highlighted during the official handover of two newly constructed homes in the Mhlambanyatsi and Mangcongco constituencies, an event officiated by Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla.

During the ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister Dladla reiterated the King's directive from the recent opening of Parliament, emphasising that every liSwati deserves a proper and safe home. This reflects the administration's ongoing efforts to address housing insecurity, especially among the most vulnerable populations.

The first beneficiary of this initiative was Bawinile Phakathi, a 56-year-old widow residing in Zandondo under the Mhlambanyatsi Inkhundla. Bawinile's previous dwelling had become increasingly unsafe since 2022, with walls crumbling and large structural cracks posing a serious risk to her and her family's safety. "When it is raining, I do not sleep, fearing the house will collapse on me and my children," she shared emotionally. The handover of her new home marks a significant improvement in her living conditions, offering her and her family a secure and dignified place to live.

Bawinile's household includes two of her children and grandchildren, and she supports them through hawking. The communi-



▲ One of houses which was handed over.

ty and government have rallied around her family, with Walk by Faith Church donating five blankets, while the Deputy Prime Minister's Office committed to further assistance by fencing the property and building a make-shift kitchen. These additional supports aim to enhance the family's quality of life beyond just shelter.

The second home was handed over to Robert Mbolwane Mabuza, a 77-year-old resident of Mabhukwini in the Mangcongco Inkhundla. His previous home, a stick-and-mud hut, collapsed last year after years of deterioration and damage from heavy rains. Before the collapse, Mabuza endured harsh conditions, often sleeping under plastic

sheeting to shield himself from leaks. His children had left the home out of concern for their safety, leaving him isolated. "Before it collapsed, the house leaked terribly. I used to sleep covered in plastic. My children left out of fear, and I was living alone," he recounted.

The Deputy Prime Minister highlighted that Mabuza's situation is not unique. Many families throughout Eswatini continue to face urgent housing needs, exacerbated by the severe weather conditions earlier this year that caused widespread destruction. The government, through the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), is actively conducting assessments to identi-



▲ The Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla making her remarks during the houses handover at Mangcongco Inkhundla

fy vulnerable households and prioritise the provision of safe, dignified housing.

In addition to the new homes, both families received beds and wardrobes donated by Montigny Company, along with food parcels from the Deputy Prime Minister's office, ensuring immediate relief and comfort.

This housing initiative is part of a broader national strategy to uplift vulnerable citizens, reduce poverty, and enhance community resilience.



▲ Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla interacting with one of the families.

... DPM urges Mangcongco residents to prioritise education and school access

THE Deputy Prime Minister has urged the constituency and Umphakatsi Councils to motivate children to attend school and complete their education, in line with Eswatini's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Speaking during the handover of a newly constructed house to Robert Mbolwane Mabuza at Mabhukwini, Dladla reaffirmed government's dedication to achieving SDG 4 which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030.

The DPM stressed that education remains central to national development and to His

Majesty King Mswati III's vision of empowering citizens through knowledge and opportunity.

Dladla said to help address the challenges faced by the community, the leaders must collaborate and make use of the Regional Development Fund (RDF) available at Tinkhundla centres. She said communities can apply for loans to purchase a kombi to transport children to and from school safely.

The DPM said ensuring children remain in school is not only a government responsibility but a shared community effort that will help the country meet its education targets by 2030.

Christmas came early this year

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Russell Nxumalo passes away

By Delisa Magagula

THE nation is mourning the death of Russell Vusumuzi Nxumalo, Commissioner of Cooperative Development under the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade.

The family of Nxumalo and the Ministry have confirmed his passing.

The news has shocked the country, with many describing him as a remarkable public servant who dedicated his life to serving the nation.

Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khumalo, confirmed the sad news and said the ministry was deeply saddened by Nxumalo's death.

He said an official statement would be released soon. The family could not comment at the time but has asked for privacy while they mourn.

Nxumalo's career in the civil service spanned several important roles. In 2022, he was appointed as National Civil Registrar,

where he was responsible for managing key national records and registration processes.

He later joined the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade as Commissioner of Cooperative Development, a role that made him a familiar face across Eswatini's cooperative movement.

As Commissioner, Nxumalo played a leading role in strengthening the country's cooperative sector. In August 2025, he announced progress toward establishing Eswatini's first cooperative bank, a three-year project aimed at improving access to finance for cooperative members.

He reported that assets in the cooperative sector had grown to more than E3.5 billion and said the initiative would help build financial inclusion across the country.

In September 2025, he introduced a memorandum of understanding aimed at improving transparency within the cooperative sector. The agreement focused on digitalising cooperative operations, allowing real-time tracking of savings and better financial reporting for members.

The project was widely praised for bringing modern systems into the cooperative

movement. Nxumalo also represented Eswatini at the national Cooperative Day celebrations in 2024, where he encouraged societies to strengthen their management structures and embrace accountability.

His colleagues have described him as a visionary and a hardworking official who cared deeply about cooperative members and rural development.

Following news of his death, tributes poured in from government officials, business leaders and members of the cooperative movement.

Many described him as dedicated, approachable and passionate about improving people's lives through sustainable economic initiatives.

His sudden passing has left a major gap in the ministry and the cooperative sector. At this stage, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade has only confirmed his death and said more details will be shared in due course. Russell Vusumuzi Nxumalo will be remembered for his leadership, his contribution to cooperative development, and his commitment to empowering communities across Eswatini.



▲ The late Russell Nxumalo.

Minister applauds Macmillan's role in advancing Eswatini's education

By Thokozani Mazibuko

MINISTER of Education and Training, Owen Nxumalo, has hailed Macmillan Education Eswatini as a key partner in the country's journey toward delivering quality and culturally relevant education, describing the company's contributions as a cornerstone of Eswatini's educational transformation.

The Minister made these remarks on Monday during his official visit to Macmillan Publishers' premises in Matsapha, where he met with management and staff to assess the company's ongoing collaboration with the Ministry in supporting curriculum development, textbook production, and digital learning initiatives.

"It is a great honour to be here today on this official visit to Macmillan Education Eswatini, a valued partner in our national journey to deliver quality education to all Emaswati," Nxumalo said. "This visit is not only an opportunity to engage with our longest-standing partners but also to reflect on the impact of our shared efforts and look towards the future with renewed courage."

Education and Industry: A partnership for National growth

Nxumalo noted that Macmillan's location in Matsapha Eswatini's industrial hub symbolized the interconnection between education and economic development. He commended the company for not only producing high-quality educational materials but also contributing to the local economy by supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs.

"I was pleased to learn that, over and above providing quality educational materials, the company supports local entrepreneurs by procuring from them and ensuring they are paid before their due invoice dates," the Minister highlighted.

"By publishing high-quality educational resources, Macmillan has helped develop a skilled workforce and seasoned entrepreneurs. This contribution has supported the



▲ Minister Owen Nxumalo with Macmillan Publishers top brass having a conversation.

rise of enterprises that depend on a literate and capable population, showing how education and industry can work hand in hand to drive national progress."

A transformative partnership rooted in history

Reflecting on the history of Eswatini's education system, Nxumalo celebrated what he termed one of the most "transformative partnerships in the history of education" the collaboration between the Government of Eswatini and Macmillan Publishers.

He traced the roots of this partnership back to the mid-1970s, when the Government made a bold decision to end reliance on imported textbooks from apartheid-era South Africa and instead develop materials that reflected Eswatini's values, language, and aspirations.

"Before 1978, all primary school textbooks used in Eswatini were imported from South Africa, reflecting the apartheid-era Bantu Education system a system foreign to our values, our culture, and our aspirations as an independent nation," Nxumalo explained.

Between 1974 and 1977, with support from the World Bank, USAID, and universities in the United States, up to 40 Swati curriculum specialists were trained to design and develop Eswatini's first national curriculum. The result was the establishment of the Primary



▲ The Minister inside the Macmillan Publishers storeroom.

Curriculum Unit, now known as the National Curriculum Centre (NCC) in Manzini.

"By 1977, the NCC had successfully developed the first textbooks for Grades 1 and 2 in English, Mathematics, SiSwati, and Science. This was a defining moment the birth of an education system built by emaSwati, for emaSwati," the Minister said proudly.

Nxumalo lauded the role of His late Majesty King Sobhuza II in facilitating a groundbreaking partnership between the Government and Macmillan one that was later recognized globally as a model public-private partnership for developing nations.

Under His Majesty's visionary leadership, Macmillan's Southern African headquarters were relocated from Johannesburg to

Matsapha, establishing Macmillan BOLESWA Publishers and the Macmillan Swaziland National Publishing Company (MSNP).

This collaboration produced not only textbooks but an entire ecosystem of educational publishing that empowered local authors, illustrators, and curriculum experts.

"Importantly, all textbooks used in our primary schools today are written and developed by Eswatini's own curriculum designers," Nxumalo emphasized.

Driving digital transformation

The Minister also praised Macmillan for embracing innovation by supporting the Ministry's blended learning project, which utilizes the company's digital platform to deliver 21st Century teaching and learning.

The pilot project began in 2022 with two public schools and a cohort of Grade 4 learners, who are now part of a digital learning transformation that is expected to expand nationwide in the coming years.

Nxumalo said the Ministry remains committed to building on this legacy as the country transitions toward Competency-Based Education and digital learning models. He encouraged Macmillan and other publishers to continue playing an active role in shaping the next phase of educational reform.

"The future of this nation is great, especially as we work together to deliver the most prized asset that any nation can possess a well-educated and empowered generation," he said.

"As we navigate the realities of a rapidly changing world, His Majesty's Government will continue to seek out innovative ideas from publishers such as Macmillan. Your creativity and strategic foresight are essential in preparing our learners for the future."

Nxumalo concluded by expressing deep appreciation to Macmillan Education Eswatini for its unwavering support and investment in the country's education system.

"Let me express our deepest appreciation to Macmillan Education Eswatini for its dedication to the development of our nation. May this partnership continue to flourish," he said.



Man dies after multiple stabbing

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

THE Matsapha Police are investigating a gruesome murder that has sent shockwaves through the Mbhuleni community after a 26-year-old man was found dead in the early hours of Sunday morning.

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communications Officer (PICO), Nosipho Mnguni, the incident occurred at around 02:55 a.m. on October 26, 2025, at Mbhuleni area.

The victim, whose name is being withheld until his next of kin are informed, is reported to have suffered fourteen stab wounds to the back inflicted with a sharp object.

“The Matsapha Police are currently inves-

tigating a murder case involving a 26-year-old male of Mbhuleni who was fatally stabbed multiple times in the back. The matter is under active investigation and no arrests have been made at this stage,” Mnguni confirmed.

She further appealed to members of the public to come forward with any information that could assist investigators in tracing the suspect(s) responsible for the brutal attack.

“This was a violent and senseless act, and we urge anyone who may have witnessed suspicious movements or has any relevant information to contact the nearest police station or call our toll-free Crime Stop line. All information will be treated confidentially,” added Mnguni.

Residents of Mbhuleni have expressed shock and fear following the killing, describing the deceased as a quiet young man who

rarely got into conflict. “We were woken up by noise outside, only to discover that someone had been attacked. It’s heartbreaking,” said one community member, who asked not to be named.

The motive behind the murder remains unclear, but investigators are not ruling out any possibilities, including personal disputes or revenge-related violence.

The body of the deceased was taken to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial (RFM) Hospital morgue pending a post-mortem examination.

This incident adds to growing concerns over violent crimes reported in the Matsapha corridor, with authorities urging communities to strengthen neighbourhood watch initiatives and report suspicious behaviour promptly.

Police investigations continue.



▲ Deputy Police Information and Communications Officer Nosipho Mnguni.

9-year-old boy drowns in Great Usuthu

A SOMBRE mood has engulfed the community of Mhlabubovu near Bhunya following the tragic drowning of a nine-year-old boy who lost his life while swimming in the Great Usuthu River on Friday afternoon.

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communications Officer (PICO), Nosipho Mnguni, the incident occurred on 24 October 2025 at around 3:30 p.m. when the young boy, in the company of friends, went for a swim at the river and tragically did not make it back to shore.

Preliminary police reports indicate that the children had been swimming in a deep section of the river when the boy was suddenly swept away by strong currents. Despite desperate attempts by his friends to rescue him, the current proved too powerful. The children immediately alerted nearby residents, who rushed to the scene and contacted emergency services.

“Police officers from Bhunya, along with community members, conducted a search and recovery operation. The lifeless body of the minor was retrieved a short distance downstream,” said Mnguni.

The Deputy PICO went on to extend condolences to the bereaved family, describing the incident as a painful reminder of the dangers posed by unsupervised swimming, especially in rivers and dams.

“The Royal Eswatini Police Service would like to appeal to parents and guardians to monitor children closely and discourage them from swimming in unsupervised or dangerous water bodies,” Mnguni emphasized.

Community members who spoke to Eswatini Daily described the boy as a cheerful and energetic child whose passing has left a deep void. “We are devastated. He was a bright young boy who loved playing with his friends by the river. This is truly heartbreaking,” said a tearful neighbor.

The police have since opened an inquest file as investigations continue to establish the full circumstances surrounding the tragedy.

The Great Usuthu River, known for its scenic beauty and strong currents, has in recent years been the site of several drowning incidents, prompting renewed calls for safety awareness campaigns and community vigilance.

As the Mhlabubovu community mourns the untimely death of one of its youngest members, authorities are once again urging the public to prioritize safety and ensure children are kept away from hazardous water bodies.

Man killed in Mafutseni road accident

A 39-year-old man from Ekutsimuleni tragically lost his life after being struck by a vehicle in a hit-and-run accident that occurred along the Mafutseni/Mphisi Farm public road in the early hours of Sunday morning.

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communications Officer (PICO), Nosipho Mnguni, the fatal incident took place at around 1:00 a.m. on 26 October 2025 near the Mafutseni Ranch Gate.

The victim, whose identity is being withheld until next of kin are notified, was reportedly walking along the roadside when he was hit by an unidentified motor vehicle that did not stop to render assistance.

“The pedestrian was rushed to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial (R.F.M.) Hospital, where he was unfortunately certified dead upon arrival,” Mnguni said.

She further confirmed that the driver of the vehicle fled the scene immediately after the accident and remains at large. “Police have since launched an investigation into the matter and are appealing to anyone who may have witnessed the incident or has information that could assist in tracing the driver to come forward,” she added.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has condemned the increasing number of hit-and-run cases across the country, calling



▲ Image sourced from the internet.

on motorists to take responsibility in the event of accidents.

“Leaving an accident scene without assisting the victim is a serious offence. We urge all drivers to exercise caution, particularly at night, and to stop immediately when involved in an accident,” Mnguni stressed.

Residents in the Mafutseni area expressed deep concern over the incident, noting that the stretch of road has become notorious for speeding and poor visibility at night. “This road has claimed too many lives. Drivers often ignore speed limits and pedestrians walk in the dark without reflective clothing. It’s

tragic,” said a local resident.

The deceased’s body has been taken to the R.F.M Hospital mortuary, where a post-mortem will be conducted. Police investigations continue.

Authorities are again urging both motorists and pedestrians to adhere to road safety rules drivers to slow down and remain alert, and pedestrians to wear visible clothing when walking at night.

As the Ekutsimuleni community mourns the loss of one of their own, the call for safer roads and accountability among road users grows louder.

Adultery leaves wife homeless

... as Umphakatsi strips home

By Delisa Magagula

ACCUSATIONS of adultery have spiralled into a public domestic conflict in which a woman's home was vandalised and stripped bare under the watch of her in-laws and the local Umphakatsi.

Thirty-eight-year-old Winile Nhleko revealed her marital home was forcefully cleared out last Saturday afternoon by a group that included her husband Thulani Nhleko, his relatives and members of the traditional authority.

She said her furniture, household goods and personal items were taken while she and her two young children watched in shock.

"They told me the home was now under the Umphakatsi and that I no longer had a place here. They shouted at me and called me names in front of my children," said Winile.

The dispute, according to both families, stems from accusations of infidelity that have divided the marriage and drawn in traditional leaders.

While the husband insists his wife has been repeatedly found with another man, Winile denies ever being unfaithful and says her husband's renewed relationship with his former partner mother to one of his children is the real cause

of the fallout.

Witnesses from the area say the incident began when vehicles arrived at the Nhleko homestead carrying the husband's relatives and other men linked to the Umphakatsi. Inside the house, Winile says she was ordered to sit quietly as the group moved through rooms, removing furniture and household appliances.

"They said everything belonged to the family because the house was built under my husband's name," she said.

Neighbours who requested anonymity said they saw the group loading items into vehicles.

"It looked like an eviction, there was no police around, only family and the men from the chief's kraal," said one neighbour.

When reached for comment, Thulani Nhleko confirmed that the incident took place but denied it was vandalism. He said the home was part of his late wife's property, not Winile's, and that the Umphakatsi had ruled that the structure belonged to his family.

"She has been found several times with another man. The Umphakatsi knows this matter. We followed the right channels and were told the home must come back to the family," he said.

Asked about his alleged reconciliation with his former partner, Thulani declined to elaborate, saying only, "My focus now is to restore order in my home and family."



▲ Nhleko's home after being vandalized.

ily."

A senior representative of the Umphakatsi confirmed to this publication that the traditional authority was aware of the matter.

"This is not a new case. The matter has been before us several times. We know about the removal of property, and it was part of resolving a family dispute," said the representative.

However, the official did not provide documentation or a written order authorising the seizure of household property.

Despite the incident, no case has been filed with the Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS). Winile says she fears intimidation from her husband's family and uncertainty over whether the police would intervene in what she has been told is a customary issue.

"I don't know if I still have rights. They said it's now in the hands of the Umphakatsi, not the police," said Winile.

Chief Police Communications

Superintendent Phindile Vilakati contacted for comment said no report matching the incident had been filed by Sunday evening.

They reminded citizens that property destruction and assault are criminal offences even on Swazi Nation Land, and that anyone affected should open a case.

Local residents say the scene shocked the neighbourhood. Women's rights advocates have long warned that customary family disputes can easily escalate into rights violations when not monitored by law-enforcement agencies.

"This case is another example of how women's security and property rights remain fragile under dual legal systems," said Eswatini Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) Director Nonhlanhla Dlamini commenting generally on similar cases.

"Even when disputes arise from alleged infidelity, destruction of property or eviction without proper orders cannot be justified," she added.

Worth noting is that, under Swazi law and custom, family disputes and property matters on Swazi Nation Land fall under the authority of chiefs and their Umphakatsi councils.

However, courts have repeatedly ruled that any eviction or confiscation must follow lawful procedure and cannot rely on self-help measures.

In Dlamini v Shongwe and Others (2018), the High Court ruled that even when a traditional authority has jurisdiction, forceful removal or demolition of property without written orders can be challenged as unlawful. The judgment cautioned Umphakatsi structures against acting beyond procedural limits.

Legal analysts note that cases like the Nhleko matter demonstrate the tension between tradition and state law, where families resort to customary action while victims remain unprotected by police or civil courts.

In a 2025 case of a widow's bottle store and grocery



▲ Winile Nhleko whose home was allegedly vandalized by her husband with the help of Umphakatsi.

building demolished by her area's chief, who claimed the land fell under his Umphakatsi, was widely reported.

The widow said the chief arrived with machinery and police escort, destroying the structure without a court order. The incident drew public criticism and revived calls for clear boundaries between customary and civil authority.

Observers say the Nhleko case echoes that controversy, showing how quickly personal disputes can escalate into property loss when traditional systems act unilaterally.

So far, no written order has surfaced authorising the seizure of the Nhleko home, and no law-enforcement body has intervened.

Legal experts say such a situation leaves victims in a vacuum unable to seek help from police while being told the matter is under customary control.

Human rights lawyers argue that both systems civil and traditional must coordinate to prevent abuse.

"When traditional authorities make rulings that affect property, especially involving women and minors, there should be documentation and police presence," said attorney Siphesihle Mavuso, commenting broadly on the legal principle.



▲ Chief Police Communications Superintendent Phindile Vilakati contacted for comment said no report matching the incident had been filed by Sunday evening.



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BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Eswatini reviews trading licences

THE Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade has begun consultations with key stakeholders to review the Trading Licences Order of 1975. According to the Ministry this move is aimed at modernizing Eswatini's business regulatory framework to align with the country's current economic realities. The consultative meeting, held in Mbabane, brought together representatives from business associations, federations, chambers of commerce, municipal and town councils, private sector actors, and consumer organizations.

Annual 2026 gold price forecast tops \$4 000/oz for first time

GOLD's winning streak is seen extending into next year, with analysts forecasting an annual average price above \$4,000 per ounce for the first time as economic and geopolitical turmoil keep the metal's safe-haven allure intact, a Reuters poll showed. The poll of 39 analysts and traders returned a median forecast of \$3,400 per troy ounce of gold for 2025, up from \$3,220 in July.

Moz bonds rise after TotalEnergies lifts force majeure on LNG project
JOHANNESBURG — Mozambique's sole euro bond rallied on Monday after TotalEnergies announced the lifting of force majeure on its multibillion-dollar liquefied natural gas project, paving the way for construction to resume following prolonged delays.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	16.9066	17.3696
G.B. Pound	22.6731	23.3452
EURO	19.7282	20.3347
Bank Rate	(July 2023)	7.50%
Prime Rate	(July 2023)	11%
Inflation	(July 2023)	4.5%
Petrol	E21.60/Litre	
Diesel	E22.90 /Litre	
Paraffin	E17.25/Litre	

Market value plunges as corporate bonds strengthen

By Delisa Magagula

TRADING activity on the Eswatini Stock Exchange (ESE) dropped sharply in September 2025, with the total value traded falling by 98.35 per cent compared to the previous month.

Despite the slowdown in equity trading, the corporate bond market showed resilience, registering growth on both a monthly and annual basis.

According to the ESE market report, shares worth E92, 890.50 were traded in September, compared to E5, 620 572.80 in August 2025.

The number of shares traded stood at 43,765 during the month under review. On a yearly basis, however, the market showed moderate improvement. In September 2024, shares valued at E59, 204.00 were traded, representing a 56.90 per cent increase in September 2025 compared to the same month last year.

The report attributed the steep month-on-month decline to limited trading activity on key counters and the absence of large block



▲ Eswatini Stock Exchange is located on the 3rd Floor, Ingcamu Building, Mbabane.

transactions that had boosted August's totals. Market participants said investor sentiment remained cautious amid weaker liquidity and fewer institutional trades.

Despite the drop in value traded, the local

equity market's total capitalisation recorded a marginal increase of 0.17 per cent.

The combined value of listed companies rose from E6, 784,392,934 at the end of August to E 6,795 889 01 by 30 September 2025.

The modest gain was mainly driven by an upward movement in the share price of Greystone Partners Limited, which recorded positive price performance during the month. No other major share price movements were noted.

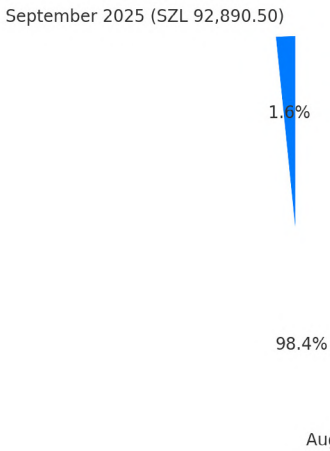
Year-on-year, however, the total market capitalisation decreased by 1.47 per cent from E6, 897, 165, 38 in September 2024 to E6,795,889,013 in September 2025. The annual decline reflects slower recovery in share prices and subdued investor activity throughout the year.

Analysts said that while equity trading volumes remain below average levels, the annual improvement in trade value indicates that there is still steady investor participation, particularly among long-term holders.

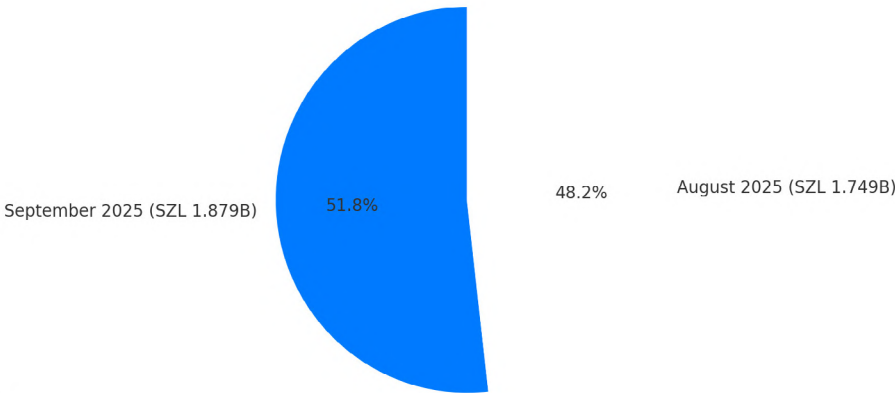
The exchange noted that overall trading activity during the third quarter of 2025 remained moderate, and that the final quarter will be key in determining whether market turnover rebounds before year-end.

Corporate bonds maintain growth momentum

Equity Market Value Traded (August vs September 2025)



Corporate Bond Market Value (August vs September 2025)



By Delisa Magagula

IN contrast to the fall in share trading, the corporate bond market continued to strengthen in September 2025, maintaining its dominance on the ESE in terms of total value.

The total nominal value of listed corporate bonds stood at E1, 879,391,132 (E1.879 billion) as of September 30, 2025. This represents a 7.43 per cent increase from E1, 749,478,547 (E1.749 billion) recorded at the end of August 2025.

The growth was attributed to sustained investor interest in fixed-income securities and active participation by corporate issuers.

During the period, eight corporate bonds commenced trading, while three bonds matured, indicating healthy turnover and contin-

uous activity in the debt segment.

On an annual basis, the total value of listed corporate bonds rose by 2.31 per cent from E1, 837,027,744 at the end of September 2024 to E1, 879,391,132 a year later.

The consistent increase reflects a steady flow of new issuances as companies continue to rely on debt markets to raise long-term capital.

Market observers said the bond market's performance underscores its role as a stable funding platform for both private and public-sector projects.

With yields offering predictable returns, investors have shown stronger preference for bonds amid the volatility of the equity market.

According to the ESE, the bond market remains the largest contributor to the exchange's overall value. The total amount of outstanding corporate debt exceeds the value of listed shares, highlighting the growing role of fixed-income securities in Eswatini's capital market.

Analysts also noted that government infrastructure projects and continued private-sector expansion could drive further growth in the bond segment during the final quarter of the year.

The report indicated that new issuances are expected in the coming months as companies seek to take advantage of stable interest rate conditions and a supportive investment climate.

With more issuers projected to tap into the market before year-end, the total value of listed corporate bonds could approach the E1.9 billion mark, reinforcing the sector's upward trajectory.

Market analysts said the sustained growth of the bond market, despite the decline in equity trading, demonstrates investor confidence in Eswatini's fixed-income space and signals continued corporate activity in the country's capital markets.

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade has begun consultations with key stakeholders to review the Trading Licences Order of 1975.

According to the Ministry this move is aimed at modernizing Eswatini's business regulatory framework to align with the country's current economic realities.

The consultative meeting, held in Mbabane, brought together representatives from business associations, federations, chambers of commerce, municipal and town councils, private sector actors, and consumer organizations.

The discussions focused on creating a more enabling and efficient environment for business operations, investment, and enterprise development.

Speaking during the session, Under Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Phesheya Dube said the review of the decades-old Order was long overdue, given the significant transformation of the country's business landscape since 1975.

"The Trading Licences Order has served the country for nearly 50 years. While it was relevant at the time, the economic and technological environment has changed dramatically. We are now working to ensure that our licensing framework supports competitiveness, ease of doing business, and inclusive growth," Dube said.

He emphasized that the Ministry's goal is to simplify and modernize licensing procedures while reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks that often discourage entrepreneurship, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The review of the Trading Licences Order forms part of broader government efforts to make Eswatini a more attractive destination for investment. According to the Ministry, the proposed reforms will seek to:

Simplify licensing processes to reduce the time and cost of registration

Eliminate outdated and restrictive provisions that no longer reflect the realities of today's economy; and

Foster an enabling environment that supports enterprise growth and fair competition.

Nkambule noted that the revision is aligned with Eswatini's strategic objectives under the National Development Plan, which seeks to improve the country's business climate and stimulate private sector-led growth.

"Our aim is to ensure that the licensing framework speaks to modern business practices. We are focusing on transparency, efficiency, and accessibility, especially for youth and women who are increasingly venturing into trade and services," he added.

In addition to reviewing the licensing framework, the Ministry is also drafting the Shop Trading Hours Regulations, a new set of guidelines expected to promote flexibility in retail operations, enhance consumer convenience, and stimulate economic activity beyond conventional business hours.

The regulations will allow businesses greater freedom to determine trading hours in accordance with consumer demand and market trends. The Ministry believes this could open new opportunities for employment, particularly in the retail, tourism, and hospitality sectors.

"Extended trading hours not only serve consumers better but also create space for new business models, especially in urban areas where demand patterns are evolving. We are looking at ways to balance flexibility with fair labour practices," explained Dube.

Eswatini reviews trading licences

... to boost business efficiency



▲ The review marks one of the most significant steps in Eswatini's ongoing efforts to improve its business environment.

Meanwhile, the private sector has welcomed the government's decision to revisit the existing trade laws. Eswatini Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECCI) CEO, Ncamiso Simelane, said the business community has long advocated for reforms to streamline licensing and compliance requirements.

"For years, businesses have struggled with outdated licensing procedures that slow down operations and discourage investment. We view this review as a step in the right direction. A modern and transparent system will improve business confidence and attract both local and foreign investors," said Simelane.

Simelane also commended the Ministry for engaging industry players early in the review process, noting that consultation is critical to ensuring the new law addresses real challenges faced by entrepreneurs.

"The inclusion of diverse voices from SMEs to large corporations will ensure the new framework is practical and inclusive. We hope this will also encourage informal traders to transition into the formal economy," he added.

Municipal leaders have also expressed optimism about the proposed changes. Mbabane City Council Chief Executive Officer, Gciniwe Fakudze said aligning trading hours and licensing systems with modern needs could enhance urban economic activity and revenue collection.

"Local authorities depend heavily on licensing for revenue, but the current system is cumbersome. Simplification and digitalisation of licensing will not only improve compliance but also

help councils support small traders more effectively," Fakudze said.

The Ministry has identified youth and women entrepreneurs as key beneficiaries of the reforms. Many operate small retail outlets, beauty salons, and service-oriented businesses that are often hindered by licensing delays and restrictions.

"By reducing red tape and allowing longer operating hours, we hope to empower young and female entrepreneurs to grow their enterprises. Our goal is to make it easier for them to formalize their businesses and access financing," Dube said.

The Ministry will compile feedback from the consultations and draft the revised Trading Licences Bill for presentation to Cabinet before it proceeds to Parliament for approval.

Stakeholders are also expected to participate in additional review sessions before the legislation is finalized.

"The process is participatory because the business community and the public are directly affected by these laws. We are building a modern, responsive, and inclusive regulatory system that will strengthen Eswatini's competitiveness in the region," Dube said.

The review marks one of the most significant steps in Eswatini's on-going efforts to improve its business environment and attract investment.

Once implemented, the new framework is expected to streamline business registration, stimulate entrepreneurship, and create a more vibrant and resilient economy.



▲ Under Secretary, in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade Phesheya Dube.



▲ Gold bars are displayed at a gold jewellery shop in the northern Indian city of Chandigarh.

Annual 2026 gold price forecast tops \$4 000/oz for first time

By Anmol Choubey

GOLD's winning streak is seen extending into next year, with analysts forecasting an annual average price above \$4,000 per ounce for the first time as economic and geopolitical turmoil keep the metal's safe-haven allure intact, a Reuters poll showed.

The poll of 39 analysts and traders returned a median forecast of \$3,400 per troy ounce of gold for 2025, up from \$3,220 in July. They expect prices to average \$4,275 in 2026, up sharply from \$3,400 three months prior.

Gold has hit successive record highs and hurdled the \$4,000/oz mark to gain 54 per cent so far this year, leaving the metal on track for its strongest annual performance since the 1979 oil crisis. Prices have averaged \$3,281 so far this year.

"Gold's performance in 2025 reflects more than the strength of a rally. It marks an acceptance of a new reality. The market is no longer responding to short-term shocks but to a deeper loss of confidence

in policymakers, currencies, and the financial system itself," said David Russell at GoldCore.

Gold, a traditional hedge during times of uncertainty, has gained on broader geopolitical concerns, trade turmoil and a swing away from dollar dominance, with central bank purchases and inflows into exchange-traded funds underpinning its rise. Expectations of U.S. interest rate cuts have also supported the non-yielding metal.

While analysts foresee continued gains for gold into 2026, they expect the pace to moderate.

Persistent uncertainty is likely to sustain support for the rally, with central banks anticipated to continue buying gold for reserve diversification and investors increasingly treating the metal as a core portfolio asset rather than a speculative investment, analysts say.

"While jewellery demand may remain price-constrained, the official sector's strategic purchases, together with retail and institutional investment flows, are likely to be the dominant drivers," said Nitesh Shah, commodities strategist at WisdomTree. (Reuters)

Moz bonds rise after TotalEnergies lifts force majeure on LNG project

By Colleen Goko

JOHANNESBURG — Mozambique's sole euro bond rallied on Monday after TotalEnergies announced the lifting of force majeure on its multibillion-dollar liquefied natural gas project, paving the way for construction to resume following prolonged delays.

The dollar bonds maturing in 2031 climbed over 2 cents, with bids at 89.38 cents on the dollar by 1112 GMT, bringing the yield down to 12.53 per cent, its lowest level in two weeks. The lifting of force majeure is a positive sign for the project, whose potential export revenue could transform Mozambique's economy, though the 13 million metric-ton-per-year plant is only expected to come online in 2029.

The plant, located in the conflict-prone Cabo Delgado province, is reported to be 40 per cent complete, but regional security concerns persist despite Rwanda-backed military support.

Morgan Stanley strategists Neville Mandimika and Simon Waever said in a note that Mozambique's "near-term fragility and its long-term potential could not be more striking", citing financing constraints and polit-



▲ A sign with the logo of French oil and gas company TotalEnergies is pictured at a petrol station in Vertou near Nantes, France.

ical tensions following election unrest last year.

"Yet, if the country can maintain stability and implement prudent reforms, the LNG boom expected in 2029/2030 could create fiscal space, improve the balance of payments, and support broad-based growth," they added. (Reuters)

Musk could leave Tesla if \$1 trillion pay plan is rejected, chair warns

ELON Musk could leave Tesla as CEO if his proposed \$1 trillion pay package was not approved, Chair Robyn Denholm warned in a letter to shareholders on Monday.

The appeal comes ahead of the November 6 annual meeting, with Tesla's board having faced repeated criticism for not acting in shareholders' best interests and governance experts and advocacy groups questioning its independence and oversight of Musk's influence.

The proposed performance-based plan was designed to retain and motivate Musk to continue leading Tesla for at least another seven-and-a-half years, Denholm said in the letter.

Musk's leadership was "critical" to Tesla's success, she said, and warned that without a plan that properly incentivizes him, the company could lose his "time, talent and vision". Musk's role was vital as Tesla seeks to become a global leader in artificial intelligence and autonomous technology, she said.

The proposed package would grant Musk 12 tranches of stock options tied to ambi-



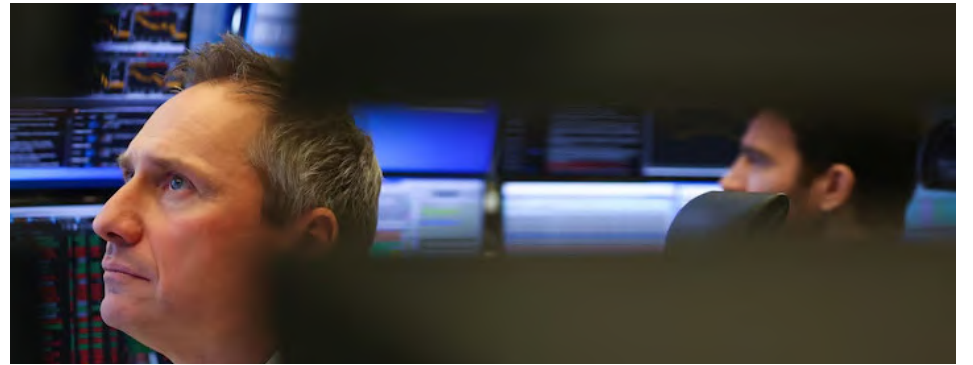
▲ Elon Musk.

tious targets, including a market capitalization of \$8.5 trillion and milestones in autonomous driving and robotics.

Denholm's letter portrays the package as necessary to align Musk's incentives with shareholder value and long-term growth, also urging investors to re-elect three long-serving directors who have worked closely with him.

Tesla's board has been under scrutiny for years over its close relationship with Musk. A Delaware court earlier this year struck down his 2018 pay deal, finding it was improperly awarded and negotiated by directors who were not fully independent. (Reuters)

Stocks gain on trade deal optimism



▲ Stock brokers of the Frankfurt stock exchange in Frankfurt, Germany.

LONDON — Global stocks bounced on Monday as signs of cooling trade tensions between China and the U.S. encouraged investors, marking a strong start to a week dominated by central bank meetings and megacap earnings.

Top Chinese and U.S. economic officials on Sunday hashed out the framework of a trade deal for U.S. President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping to decide on later this week at a meeting in South Korea.

A trade deal would pause steeper U.S. tariffs and Chinese rare earths export controls, helping ease some concerns among investors that a trade truce between the world's two largest economies might break down. European shares rose modestly, leaving the STOXX 600 (.STOXX), opens new tab up 0.1 per cent around record highs, taking their lead from stocks across Asia rallying sharply.

US stock futures jump

"Investors will want to see confirmation that the trade truce holds and that China's stimulus and reform signals translate into tangible growth momentum," said Charu Chanana, chief investment strategist at Saxo.

U.S. stock futures pointed to a sharp rally at the open later, as Nasdaq futures rose 1.4 per cent and those for the S&P 500 gained 0.9 per cent.

George Boubouras, managing director of K2 Asset Management, said the market was content with the U.S.-China momentum

in recent days: "Over the past few months, the market has been looking through global tariff negotiations understanding that some commentary can be a bit of theatre and noise."

Reflecting some of that optimism was a rise in the Chinese yuan to a more than one-month high against the dollar on Monday of 7.1091. Prior to the market open, the People's Bank of China set the official midpoint rate at 7.0881 per dollar, its strongest since October 15, 2024, above a Reuters estimate of 7.1146.

"If a deal is done based on today's reported details, the yuan has scope for further gains," MUFG head of research Derek Halpenny said.

"Better risk conditions and some improvement in global growth expectations should result in the U.S. dollar weakening as investors look at better prospects for non-dollar currencies," he said.

Focus on megacap earnings

The busiest part of the U.S. earnings season is poised to begin, with megacaps Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet, Amazon (and Meta Platforms all due to report results this week. While the profit edge of "Magnificent Seven" companies - whose huge market capitalisations mean their shares dominate equity indexes - over the rest of the index is narrowing, they are still expected to post stronger results for this period.

A number of the megacap companies are also key players in the artificial intelligence industry, enthusiasm for which has been the main driver of stock market performance. (Reuters)

Sudanese force's capture of Darfur city could cement country's split

A Sudanese paramilitary force is battling the last pockets of resistance in a Darfur city that has endured a brutal 18-month siege and where a full takeover would entrench a geographical division of the country between rival military factions.

The advance by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has also raised fears of reprisals against the estimated 250,000 people remaining in al-Fashir, the final holdout of the Sudanese army in the western Darfur region, and of an escalation of fighting elsewhere in Sudan.

Since Sunday, when the RSF said it had captured the army's headquarters in al-Fashir, RSF fighters have been detaining fleeing civilians in nearby towns and villages, witnesses as well as humanitarian and military sources said. Some 26,000 people had been displaced by the fighting, the International Organization for Migration said.

Two Sudanese military sources said on Monday that thousands of soldiers from the army and allied former rebel groups were surrounded by RSF fighters after retreating into neighbourhoods in western al-Fashir.

RISK OF PARTITION

Darfur, the RSF's stronghold, is home to a parallel government it created, and RSF sources say it is also the current base for top RSF leaders including General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, widely known as Hemedti.

"The RSF's full control of the Darfur region could have dangerous and worrying consequences in the future in terms of partition," Massad Boulos, U.S. senior adviser for Arab and African affairs, told Al Jazeera Mubasher.

He compared that prospect to Libya, where competing governments linked to military factions based in the east and west created a de facto geographical split.

The RSF, which has been locked in a civil



war with the army for more than two-and-a-half years, could also use the momentum to try to regain ground elsewhere in Sudan, analysts said.

Unless the latest push for U.S.-brokered peace talks makes progress where past attempts have stalled, that could worsen a conflict which has already caused famine, triggered waves of ethnically driven violence and displaced millions of people.

The army was able to oust the RSF from the Sudanese capital Khartoum earlier this year, but the paramilitaries have amassed advanced weaponry including long-range drones that could allow them to attempt a comeback, one military and one RSF source said.

POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER AD-

VANCES

U.N. chief Antonio Guterres said foreign provision of weapons and increasing external interference in the war were undermining the chances of a political solution. The army accuses the United Arab Emirates of providing military support to the RSF, which the UAE denies.

"We haven't seen a sign that RSF leadership is content with just western Sudan," said Alan Boswell of Crisis Group. "So as long as they are receiving enough supplies to continue a war effort, they still look like they are continuing to escalate this war."

The RSF made gains over the weekend in the strategic city of Bara, North Kordofan, which puts it within hours of Khartoum.

"Our liberation of al-Fashir is the libera-

tion of Sudan, all the way to Port Sudan.... We are coming and we are coming heavy," said RSF second-in-command Abdelrahim Dagalo speaking in a video dated Sunday released by the force from the army's al-Fashir base.

"The new Sudan goes forward, the old Sudan gets destroyed," one soldier can be heard chanting, a key slogan for the RSF-led authority.

In a statement on Monday the RSF said it would protect civilians in al-Fashir and that humanitarian preparations were being made.

CIVILIANS ROUNDED UP

Two military sources and two humanitarian sources said the RSF appeared to be directing fleeing civilians to towns around al-Fashir where it aimed to set up displacement camps.

Eyewitnesses who arrived in Tawila - a town to the east controlled by a neutral force that has absorbed hundreds of thousands of fleeing civilians - told Reuters they had been directed to the nearby town of Garney on foot, and that hundreds of people including women and children remained in RSF custody there.

Activists have long warned of revenge attacks on civilians from the Zaghawa tribe after the intense fight for the city, as happened in the Zamzam displacement camp to the south.

RSF officials released videos on Sunday saying they were providing safe passage for former fighters, though other videos posted by activists but not verified by Reuters appeared to show RSF fighters shooting unarmed men and cheering around dead bodies.

(Reuters)

Cameroon's Biya re-elected at 92, opposition reports gunfire

CAMEROON'S President Paul Biya, the world's oldest serving ruler, secured an eighth term in office on Monday, vote results showed, as the main opposition challenger who has also claimed victory reported gunfire near his home.

Biya, 92, won 53.66% of the vote, against 35.19% for his former ally, Issa Tchiroma Bakary, the Constitutional Council said. A new seven-year term could keep the veteran leader in power until he is nearly 100.

Opposition protesters have clashed with security forces repeatedly over the past week after partial results suggested Biya was on course to win the October 12 vote.

There was no immediate comment on the result from the government, which has rejected opposition accusations of irregularities.

After the results were announced, Tchiroma wrote on Facebook that two people were killed after shots were fired at civilians outside his home in the northern city of Garoua.

ANTI-RIOT POLICE DEPLOY IN YAOUNDE, STREETS MOSTLY EMPTY

He did not say who had fired the shots or comment directly on the election result. Reuters could not confirm his account independently. Last week he said he had won the election and would not accept any other result.

Sporadic protests erupted in several towns across the country after the result was announced.

In Garoua, angry protesters guarding Tchiroma's home said they targeted a house sheltering snipers firing at supporters, bursting a water tank.

Streets were largely deserted in the capital Yaounde and most businesses closed, with anti-riot police deployed across the city.

Reuters reporters witnessed clashes between opposition supporters and security forces in Douala, where police fired tear gas as protesters protected their faces with masks or clothing. Tchiroma supporters erected barricades, piled debris on the road and burned tires, darkening the sky.

"We all know that the majority of Cameroon's people voted for Issa Tchiroma Bakary," said one protester in Douala. "It is inadmissible that President Paul Biya won in certain war zones."

The result raised the prospect of more confrontations between opposition supporters and security forces, a day after at least four people died in clashes in Cameroon's commercial capital Douala.

"We expect unrest to escalate as Cameroonians widely reject the official result, and we cannot see the Biya government lasting much longer," said Francois Conradie, lead political economist at Oxford Economics.

"Biya now has a notably shaky mandate given many of his own citizens don't believe he won the election," Murithi Mutiga, Africa Program Director at the International Crisis Group, told Reuters.

"We call on Biya to urgently initiate a na-



▲ Cameroon's President Paul Biya.

tional mediation to prevent further escalation," Mutiga added.

Biya, 92, took office in 1982 and has held a tight grip on power ever since, doing away with the presidential term limit in 2008 and winning reelection by comfortable margins.

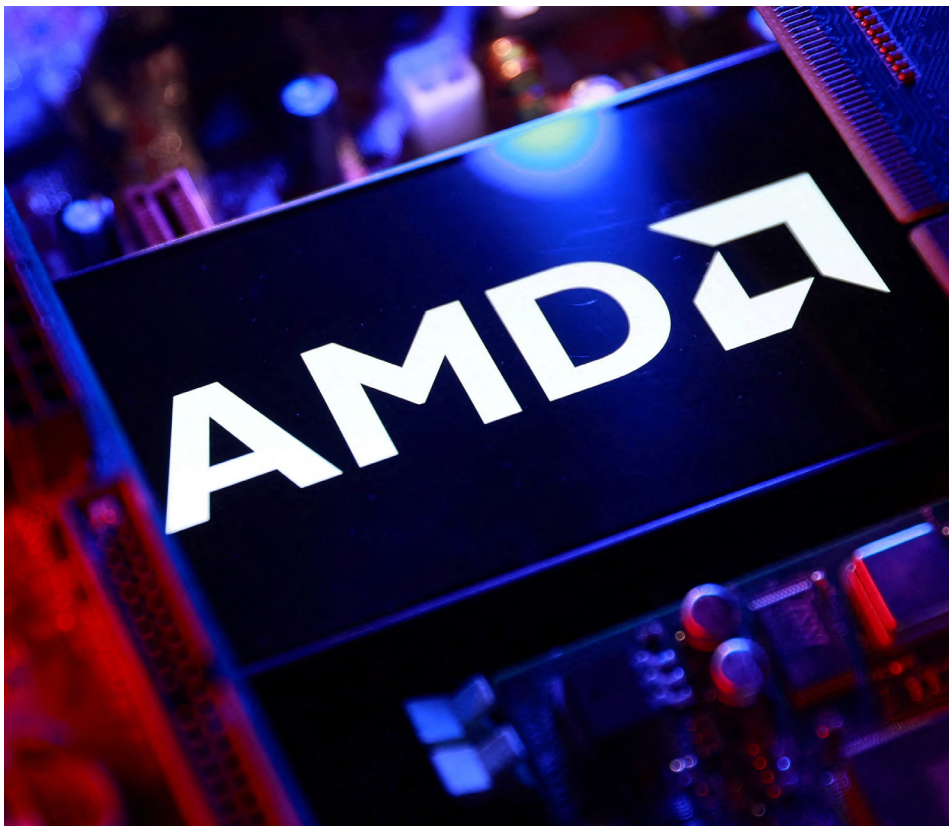
"Hereby declared elected President of the Republic, having obtained the majority

of the votes cast, the candidate, Biya, Paul," Clement Atangana, president of the Constitutional Council, said.

Tchiroma is a former government spokesperson and employment minister in his late 70s who broke ranks with Biya earlier this year.

(Reuters)

US Department of Energy forms \$1 billion supercomputer and AI partnership with AMD



▲ An AMD logo and a computer motherboard appear in this illustration.

THE U.S. has formed a \$1 billion partnership with Advanced Micro Devices (AMD.O), opens new tab to construct two supercomputers that will tackle large scientific problems ranging from nuclear power to cancer treatments to national security, Energy Secretary Chris Wright and AMD CEO

Lisa Su told Reuters.

The U.S. is building the two machines to ensure the country has enough supercomputers to run increasingly complex experiments that require harnessing enormous amounts of data-crunching capability. The machines can accelerate the process of making scientific discoveries in areas the U.S. is focused on.

Energy Secretary Wright said the systems would “supercharge” advances in nuclear power and fusion energy, technologies for defense and national security, and the development of drugs. Scientists and companies are trying to replicate fusion, the reaction that fuels the sun, by jamming light atoms in a plasma gas under intense heat and pressure to release massive amounts of energy. “We’ve made great progress, but plasmas are unstable, and we need to recreate the center of the sun on Earth,” Wright told Reuters.

“We’re going to get just massively faster progress using the computation from these AI systems that I believe will have practical pathways to harness fusion energy in the next two or three years,” Wright said the supercomputers would also help manage the U.S. arsenal of nuclear weapons and accelerate drug discovery by simulating ways to treat cancer down to the molecular level. “My hope is in the next five or eight years, we will turn most cancers, many of which today are ultimate death sentences, into manageable conditions,” Wright said.

The plans call for the first computer called Lux to be constructed and come online within the next six months. It will be based around AMD’s MI355X artificial intelligence chips, and the design will also include central processors (CPUs) and networking chips made by AMD. The system is co-developed by AMD, Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE.N), opens new tab, Oracle Cloud Infrastructure and Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL).

AMD’s Su said the Lux deployment was the fastest deployment of this size of computer that she has seen.

“This is the speed and agility that we wanted to (do) this for the U.S. AI efforts,” Su said.

ORNL Director Stephen Streiffer said the Lux supercomputer will deliver about three times the AI capacity of current supercomputers.

The second, more advanced computer called Discovery will be based around AMD’s MI430 series of AI chips that are tuned for high-performance computing. This system will be designed by ORNL, HPE and AMD. Discovery is expected to be delivered in 2028 and be ready for operations in 2029.

Streiffer said he expected enormous gains but couldn’t predict how much greater computational capability it would have.

The MI430 is a special variant of its MI400 series that combines important features of traditional supercomputing chips along with the features to run AI applications, Su said.

The Department of Energy will host the computers, the companies will provide the machines and capital spending, and both sides will share the computing power, a DOE official said.

The two supercomputers based on AMD chips are intended to be the first of many of these types of partnerships with private industry and DOE labs across the country, the official said.

(Reuters)

Big Tech to report earnings under specter of AI bubble

AS America’s tech titans report earnings this week, one question looms large: is the artificial intelligence boom that has inflated valuations headed for the next big bubble?

Microsoft, Alphabet Amazon and Meta are poised to report that revenue rose at a brisk pace in the July-September quarter, according to LSEG data.

The companies themselves are likely to say they will continue to pour billions into AI because it holds promise in the long term.

But business leaders including OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos and Goldman Sachs CEO David Solomon have warned in recent months that the frenzy in tech stocks has outrun fundamentals.

Investors, unnerved by the exuberance yet wary of betting against it, have started shifting away from hyped-up stocks, using dot-com-era strategies to dodge AI bubble risks.

AI RETURNS REMAIN UNCERTAIN

The four tech giants and other major cloud firms are together expected to spend \$400 billion on AI infrastructure this year - but returns for businesses adopting the technology remain uncertain.

A widely cited MIT study, opens new tab earlier this year found that of the more than 300 AI projects analyzed, only about 5% delivered measurable gains. Most AI projects stall at the pilot stage due to weak integration into workflows and models that fail to scale, the study found.

“Overall, the models are not there. I feel like the industry is making too big of a jump and is trying to pretend like this is amazing, and it’s not. It’s slop,” OpenAI co-founder and Tesla’s former AI head Andrej Karpathy said earlier this month, opens new tab.



▲ A man stands in front of Google logos during a media reception at the Google France headquarters ahead of the Artificial Intelligence Action Summit in Paris, France.

That could spell trouble for the AI-fueled rally that has added about \$6 trillion to the Big Tech companies’ market value since ChatGPT’s November 2022 debut - and for the broader U.S. economy, which some economists say has been propped up by AI spending offsetting the drag from Trump-administration tariffs.

CIRCULAR DEALS ADD TO THE NERVOUSNESS

Adding to the unease is a web of circular deals reminiscent of the 1990s dotcom boom, including Nvidia’s potential \$100 billion investment in OpenAI, one of its largest customers.

OpenAI has signed AI compute deals

worth \$1 trillion with few details on how it will fund them, including a commitment to purchase \$300 billion in computing power from Oracle Debt is also playing a growing role in financing Big Tech’s AI infrastructure spree in a departure from past investment cycles. Meta recently signed a \$27 billion financing deal with private-credit firm Blue Owl Capital for its largest data center.

“When the same companies are both funding and relying on each other, decisions may no longer be based on real demand or performance - but on reinforcing growth expectations,” said Ahmed Banafa, engineering professor at San Jose State University.

“These deals aren’t necessarily problemat-

ic on their own - but when they become the norm, they increase systemic risk.”

SOME INVESTORS BET ADOPTION WILL GROW

Some investors said beneath the froth, real value is emerging - pointing to double-digit revenue growth and strong cash flows keeping Big Tech balance sheets healthy.

“Adoption may be low right now but that’s not a forward indicator. With greater spend and greater innovation in these models, the adoption is going to grow,” said Eric Schiffer, CEO of Los Angeles-based investment firm Patriarch Organization, which holds shares in all the “Magnificent Seven” companies.

“I don’t think we are at a bubble stage yet.”

In the July-September quarter, the cloud-computing units of Amazon, Microsoft and Google are all expected to report strong growth despite capacity constraints limiting their ability to meet AI demand. They are also likely to reaffirm their capital spending plans.

Microsoft Azure revenue likely rose 38.4% in the period, outpacing expected growth of 30.1% for Google Cloud and 18% for Amazon Web Services, Visible Alpha data shows.

AWS remains the largest player but has lagged Microsoft, which has benefited from its OpenAI tie-up, and Google, whose models have gained traction with startups. A recent AWS outage that disrupted several popular apps drew fresh scrutiny.

Overall, Microsoft is expected to report revenue growth of 14.9% in the quarter, while Alphabet’s will likely rise 13.2%, according to LSEG data. Amazon and Meta are likely to deliver revenue growth of 11.9% and 21.7%, respectively.

(Reuters)

U.S. President Donald Trump received a royal welcome on Monday in Japan, the latest leg of a five-day Asia trip which he hopes to cap with an agreement on a trade war truce with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump, making his longest journey abroad since taking office in January, announced a flurry of deals on trade and critical minerals with four Southeast Asian nations during the first stop in Malaysia and is set to meet Xi in South Korea on Thursday.

Negotiators from the world's top two economies hashed out a framework on Sunday for a deal to pause steeper American tariffs and Chinese rare earths export controls, U.S. officials said. The news sent Asian stocks soaring to record peaks.

"I've got a lot of respect for President Xi and I think we're going to come away with a deal," Trump told reporters on Air Force One before landing in the Japanese capital Tokyo.

TRUMP MEETS JAPANESE EMPEROR

Wearing a gold tie and blue suit, Trump gave a few fist pumps before his helicopter whisked him off for a scenic night tour of Tokyo, several of its towers lit up in the red, white and blue of the American flag.

He later went to the Imperial Palace, where he shook hands and posed for photographs with Japanese Emperor Naruhito.

Thousands of police were guarding Tokyo after a knife-wielding man was arrested on Friday outside the U.S. embassy, and an anti-Trump protest was planned in downtown Shinjuku.

Trump has already won a \$550-billion investment pledge from Tokyo in exchange for respite from punishing import tariffs.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and Japanese counterpart Ryosei Akazawa, architects of the tariff deal agreed in July, discussed power grids as being a potential investment area over a sushi lunch in Tokyo earlier on Monday, local media reported.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is hoping

Argentina's midterm election hands decisive win to Milei's libertarian overhaul

ARGENTINE President Javier Milei's party cruised to victory in midterm legislative elections as voters handed him a mandate to keep pushing through his radical overhaul of the economy despite widespread discontent with his deep austerity measures.

A relief to Milei, whose poll numbers had sagged in recent weeks, the results are also likely to please U.S. President Donald Trump, whose administration had faced criticism after providing Argentina with a hefty financial bailout.

"Congratulations to President Javier Milei on his Landslide Victory in Argentina. He is doing a wonderful job! Our confidence in him was justified by the People of Argentina," Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Analysts said the stronger-than-expected showing could reflect fear of renewed economic turmoil if the country abandoned Milei's austerity policies which, while slashing subsidies long relied on by many Argentines, have succeeded in drastically slowing inflation.

"Argentines showed that they don't want to return to the model of failure," said Milei, speaking triumphantly before a crowd of supporters at a hotel in Buenos Aires after the results.

ARGENTINE PUBLIC WARY OF PAST ECONOMIC CRISES

Gustavo Cordoba, the director of the Argentine Zuban Cordoba polling firm, said he was surprised by Milei's showing and thought it reflected concern about potentially repeating the economic crises of past governments.

"Many people were willing to give the gov-

Trump welcomed in Japan as China trade truce hopes rise



▲ U.S. President Donald Trump meets with Japan's Emperor Naruhito at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, Japan October.

to further impress Trump on Tuesday with promises to purchase U.S. pickup trucks, soybeans and gas, and announce an agreement on shipbuilding, sources with knowledge of the plans told Reuters.

Trump said he was looking forward to meeting Takaichi, a close ally of his late friend and golfing partner, former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, adding: "I think she's going to be great."

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent met Finance Minister Satsuki Katayama at her

ministry on Monday.

Their first in-person meeting touched upon the Takaichi government's proactive fiscal policy and Japan's investment pledge, and there were no talks directly on the Bank of Japan's monetary policy, Katayama told reporters.

TRADE AND SECURITY ON AGENDA

Trump was the first foreign leader to meet Naruhito after he came to the throne in 2019, continuing an imperial line that some say is the world's oldest hereditary monarchy.

Naruhito's role is symbolic, and the key diplomacy will take place with Takaichi on Tuesday at the nearby Akasaka Palace, where he met Abe six years ago and will be welcomed by a military honour guard.

Among the investment pledges, the two countries will sign a memorandum of understanding on investment in shipbuilding, a source with knowledge of the plans said.

Takaichi is expected to reassure Trump that Tokyo is willing to do more on security after telling lawmakers on Friday she plans to accelerate Japan's biggest defence build-up since World War Two.

Japan hosts the largest concentration of U.S. military power abroad. Trump has said previously Tokyo is not spending enough to defend its islands from an increasingly assertive China.

While Takaichi has said she will speed plans to boost defence spending to 2% of GDP, she may struggle to commit Japan to any further increases that Trump seeks, as her ruling coalition does not have a majority in parliament.

Trump is due to leave on Wednesday for Gyeongju in South Korea, where he will hold talks with President Lee Jae Myung. Bessent said the overall framework of a deal with South Korea was also done but would not be finalised this week.

Trump's expected meeting with Xi on Thursday will come after Washington and Beijing have raised tariffs on each other's exports and threatened to halt trade involving critical minerals and technologies.

Neither side expects a breakthrough that would restore the terms of trade that existed before Trump's return to power.

(Reuters)



▲ Argentina's President Javier Milei celebrates after the La Libertad Avanza party won the midterm election, which is seen as crucial for Milei's administration after U.S. President Donald Trump warned that future support for Argentina would depend on Milei's party performing well in the vote, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

private sector investment and job creators, bringing prosperity to the Argentine people," U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a post on X while congratulating Milei.

MILEI GETS BIG WINS IN BUENOS AIRES AND NATIONALLY

The president's party, La Libertad Avanza, scored 41.5% of the vote in Buenos Aires province compared with 40.8% for the Peronist coalition, according to official results. The province has long been a political stronghold for the Peronists, marking a dramatic political shift, and a major comeback

for Milei from Buenos Aires congressional elections in September.

Nationwide, La Libertad Avanza got 64 seats in the House of Deputies, up from 37, according to government figures.

Half of Argentina's lower Chamber of Deputies, or 127 seats, as well as a third of the Senate, or 24 seats, were up for election in the midterm vote. The Peronist opposition movement held the largest minority in both houses, overshadowing Milei's relatively new party.

(Reuters)

‘Methodist Medley’ tops South African iTunes

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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NOTHANDO Hlophe, Eswatini’s celebrated gospel artist, has achieved a historic milestone with her latest single, ‘Methodist Medley,’ which has become the first solo gospel song by a female artist to hold the number one spot on South African iTunes for over two days since Nontokozo Mkhize’s ‘Esandleni.’

The success of ‘Methodist Medley’ is part of a broader breakthrough for female gospel artists in the region. Nothando has joined the ranks of South African gospel heavyweights Nontokozo Mkhize and Xolly Mncwango as one of the only female gospel artists to feature in the prestigious Top 50 South Africa Spotify Daily Chart in 2025.

‘Methodist Medley’ is a standout track from Nothando’s recently released album, ‘A New Dawn.’ The song has resonated deeply with listeners, surpassing 700,000 views on YouTube, a testament to its widespread impact and the strong emotional connection it has fostered. The recording was captured live during the album launch event at the Mavuso Trade Centre on June 7, 2025. The album ‘A New Dawn’ reflects Nothando’s spiritual journey, blending heartfelt worship with contemporary gospel sounds. Another track from the album, ‘Sithumela Wena,’ has also enjoyed significant success, accumulating over 330,000 views on



▲ Nothando Hlophe.

YouTube. What makes ‘Methodist Medley’ particularly special is its deep connection to Nothando’s personal faith and heritage.

Hymns

The song is a tribute to the hymns she grew up singing in the Methodist Church, which played a formative role in her spiritual development. By intertwining these traditional melodies with modern gospel arrangements, Nothando bridges the gap between past and present worship styles, evoking nostalgia while inspiring

renewed faith among listeners.

In a heartfelt reflection on the song’s meaning, Nothando explained, “These hymns carry the essence of my faith journey. They remind me of God’s faithfulness throughout my life and the comfort that comes from His presence.” For her, these hymns are more than just songs; they reflect her identity and a portal to cherished childhood memories of Sunday mornings filled with prayer and harmony.

‘Mtukulu’ climbs to no.15 on SA’s most Shazamed tracks

ESWATINI’S rising music star Lyrikal Busta has made a significant impact on the South African music scene with his latest single, ‘Mtukulu.’

The track, a powerful collaboration with South African award-winning artist Intaba Yase Dubai, has impressively charted at number 15 on South Africa’s most Shazamed songs, signalling a growing appreciation for Eswatini’s musical talent beyond its borders. Shazam, a widely used mobile application known for its advanced song recognition technology, tracks the popularity of songs as users identify music playing around them. Since its release on September 26, 2025, across all major digital platforms, ‘Mtukulu’ has captured listeners’ attention with its meaningful message.

The title ‘Mtukulu,’ which means ‘grandchild’ in SiSwati, encapsulates the song’s central theme of nostalgia, hope, and unity. Lyrikal Busta shared that the song tells a heartfelt story where an elderly man encourages his grandson to play the track repeatedly because it evokes cherished memories from the past. The song’s upbeat and energetic rhythm is crafted as a dance anthem, perfectly timed for the festive season in December. “It’s a happy and energetic anthem, and people will most definitely have something to dance to this December,” Lyrikal Busta remarked.

Beyond its infectious beat, ‘Mtukulu’ carries deeper cultural significance. Lyrikal Busta emphasised that the song was designed to resonate with listeners across



▲ Lyrikal Busta and Intaba YaseDubai.

different age groups while celebrating African heritage and identity. He noted, “The aim was to create a song that would resonate with different age groups and tell a story of where we come from as African people. I

had to feature Intaba Yase Dubai from South Africa to also convey a message of unity amongst Africans, especially in these times of xenophobic attacks.”

The song’s production was expertly handled by South African producer Skatli

Beats, with engineering by Sean Cast HQ. Reflecting on the creative process, Lyrikal Busta described his collaboration with Intaba Yase Dubai as an enriching experience. “Working on the song was amazing as I got to learn more from renowned South African award-winning artist Intaba Yase Dubai, especially after the success of ‘365 Days,’ a song where we both collaborated and has garnered over 1 million views on streaming platforms,” he said.



▲ Tenele Shongwe.

Tenele Shongwe to feature in Bongekile Nxumalo’s Live Recording

GOSPEL music lovers are eagerly anticipating a landmark event in the Eswatini music scene as celebrated gospel artist Tenele Shongwe prepares to join Bongekile Nxumalo for the live recording of Nxumalo’s debut album, ‘In Spirit and In Truth.’

Scheduled for December 6, 2025, at the TLC Events Centre, this event promises to be a powerful celebration of faith, ministry, and heartfelt worship, beginning at 4:00 p.m. Bongekile Nxumalo, who has already captured hearts with her inspiring hit song ‘Uthando,’ is set to make a significant impact with this live recording.

In a recent interview, Nxumalo shared the profound motivation behind both the album and the event. “The main aim is appreciating the ministry God has placed in my life,” she said with heartfelt conviction. Her inspiration draws heavily from the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), a biblical story that underscores the importance of faithfulness and obedience in serving God.

Prayer

Nxumalo expressed her fervent prayer that her efforts would 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.” The album’s 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. Those attending the live recording can expect an atmosphere alive with spirit-filled worship and praise, creating a communal space where truth, unity, and reverence 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.

Eswatini's Ivyson Tour for October 31

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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ESWATINI is gearing up for a landmark event as one of Africa's premier hip-hop artists, Nasty C, prepares to bring his highly anticipated Ivyson Tour to Mdzimba View Shisanyama on 31 October 2025.

The Ivyson Tour, named after Nasty C's nickname "Ivyson," is more than just a series of performances; it is a celebration of growth, identity, and legacy. Event curator Vuyani Ndzimandze emphasised the significance of the Eswatini edition. "The Eswatini edition is about connecting that energy with our local creative culture, giving fans a world-class experience while showcasing the best homegrown talent. It's more than a concert, it's a movement that celebrates ambition, youth, and self-belief."

Tickets for the event have already seen high demand, with early bird tickets completely sold out. General presale tickets are available at E200, while the Ivyson VIP experience is priced at E500, and the premium Ivyson Max tickets cost E800. Attendees who purchase tickets at the door will pay E250 for general admission, making it accessible for a wide range of fans eager to be part of this historic night.

The concert promises a dynamic lineup, featuring not only Nasty C's electrifying performance but also a curated selection of top local artists and DJs who will bring their own unique energy to the stage. According to Ndzimandze, "Expect a powerful night of music, energy, and connection. From Nasty C's unmatched performance to a lineup of



▲ South African rapper Nasty C.

top local artists and DJs bringing fire to the stage, this is going to be Eswatini's biggest music moment of the year. Expect top-tier sound, lights, visuals, and an atmosphere that will leave people talking long after the night ends."

The Ivyson Tour's core message revolves around unity, inspiration, and the pursuit of dreams. It seeks to create a space where

music and culture converge to motivate youth and celebrate the power of self-belief. Ndzimandze concluded, "The Ivyson Tour is about unity, inspiration, and living out your dreams in real time. Whether you're coming for the music, the culture, or the vibe, you'll be part of something legendary. Don't miss your chance to witness history in Eswatini on October 31."

Sands to perform at Poetry & Acoustics

A vibrant celebration of music and artistic expression is set to take place at Bahle Gallery 112 later this month, headlined by the renowned gold-selling musician Sands.

This unique event is set to be an immersive experience that blends live performances, open mic sessions, and interactive audience participation, all within the gallery's intimate and relaxed setting. The evening will commence with a guided tour of the Bahle Gallery, offering attendees the opportunity to explore the diverse and captivating artwork on display. This introduction aims to set a reflective and creative tone, encouraging guests to engage in the visual arts before the night's musical journey begins.

Following the tour, the spotlight will shift to the open mic platform, where emerging poets, singers, and spoken word artists will be invited to share their talents. This segment highlights the event's commitment to nurturing local talent and providing a supportive stage for new voices in Eswatini's artistic community.

Sands, a household name in Eswatini and beyond, will deliver an intimate live performance that promises to be the evening's centrepiece. Known for his distinctive blend of traditional tones and contemporary rhythms, Sands' music carries a soulful depth that reflects the cultural richness of his heritage. His set is expected to foster a close connection with

the audience, creating a warm and laid-back atmosphere where music becomes a shared experience rather than just a performance. Sands' ability to bridge cultural sounds with modern influences has not only earned him gold-selling status but also a devoted fan base that spans national borders.

The event is organised by Umsamo we Culture, an organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting the creative economy in Eswatini. The goal is to cultivate a vibrant space where music lovers and art enthusiasts can come together to celebrate local creativity, foster social connections, and stimulate the growth of the country's arts sector. By combining established artists like Sands with emerging performers, the event seeks to encourage cultural exchange and open new pathways for artistic careers and creative businesses.

Several key partners are contributing to the success of the evening. Bahle Gallery itself provides a lush botanical café and an inspiring gallery space that enhances the ambience, making it a scenic and welcoming venue. Tribe Studios, a respected production house, will document the event, ensuring that the performances and moments of interaction are professionally captured and shared with a wider audience. Platinum Concepts, known for their expertise in production, will elevate the atmosphere with immersive lighting and a refined technical setup, creating a captivating mood that complement the artistic performances.



▲ Sands.



▲ Eswatini comedian Cedric.

Last Friday Gags crack them up

LAUGHTER echoed through the capital last Friday evening as Molly's House of Grills hosted the much-anticipated comedy series "Last Friday Gags with Cedric & Friends."

The event marked a significant step in reviving Eswatini's stand-up comedy scene, offering a dynamic blend of humour, entertainment, and fine dining. The monthly comedy series, which took place over the weekend, transformed the popular Mbabane restaurant into a lively stage for local comedic talent. Known primarily for its exceptional cuisine and relaxed ambience, Molly's House of Grills has extended its appeal beyond the kitchen, positioning itself as a promising entertainment hub for both comedy lovers and casual patrons.

Desire

Speaking to this publication, Cedric, the show's host and founder, shared the inspiration behind Last Friday Gags. He noted that the idea stemmed from a desire to create a consistent platform for local comedians to showcase their material, connect with audiences, and sustain the growth of Eswatini's comedy culture. "We want to bring back that magic of stand-up comedy, a place that's always been the home of comedy from The Riverstone Mall in Manzini," Cedric said. "Our goal is to create a consistent platform for local comedians to showcase their best material and grow. It's about rebuilding a comedy scene that brings people together every month for a night of laughter."

The evening featured a diverse lineup of performers, including Mdura, Dr Shakes, and Ntsetselo, all of whom brought unique comedic perspectives and delivery styles. Cedric, who also performed as the evening's host, ensured that the event maintained a high level of engagement throughout. He further emphasised the show's commitment to innovation and variety, explaining that each month would bring a different set of performers and themes.

How Enhle Mbali convinced her uncles to let her marry Black Coffee

BEWITCHING television thespian Mbali Mlotshwa pleaded with her uncles on the day DJ Black Coffee paid lobola for her to allow him to marry her because he was a millionaire and she was smitten with him.

The explosive titbits are contained in the lengthy court judgment delivered by acting judge of the Johannesburg High Court, Mongezi Ntanga.

Mlotshwa also wanted the court to issue an order forcing Black Coffee to pay R500 000 a month towards the maintenance of her and their children. She also said that she sacrificed her blossoming acting career because Black Coffee wanted her to stay at home to massage his injured hand, and also because he did not want her to kiss male actors on set.

Mlotshwa dragged Black Coffee to court for a decree of divorce and equal division of their lucrative estate, estimated to be in the north of R100-million.

She argued that they were married in community of property, while Black Coffee disputed the status of their union.

In the judgment, which we have seen, Ntanga said Mlotshwa testified that she first met Black Coffee, born Nathi Maphumulo, while on the set of a television show known as Tshisa when the internationally acclaimed music producer was a guest on the show. He told her he was carrying the torch for her, and they started dating after he melted her heart.

He said they later travelled to Greece, where they were married. Mlotshwa testified that she first met Black Coffee, born Nathi Maphumulo, while on the set of a television show known as Tshisa when the internationally acclaimed music producer was a guest on the show. He told her he was carrying the torch for her, and they started dating after he melted her heart.



they were engaged.

“On the same evening as the proposal, the defendant mentioned that he would like to send a letter to her uncles for [lobolo] negotiations. She sent a text message to her aunt advising her that her fiancée wanted to send a letter home. The aunt advised her to speak with her mother, who was shocked because she was young. The plaintiff’s mother gave them her blessing for their marriage,” the judge stated.

“She testified that tradition was followed; the groom stood outside of the gate and asked for permission to come in. Her uncles were not happy that she was engaged before the defendant had spoken to her family, but she spoke to them and requested leniency, as she was in love and the defendant was a millionaire,” he stated.

They agreed on an R70 000 dowry, and Black Coffee’s family paid it in two instalments.

Ntanga said Mlotshwa explained in her testimony why she wanted half a million rand monthly from Black Coffee.

“The plaintiff explained her lifestyle by testifying that she used to get

shopping sprees of thousands of rands, euros and dollars.

“She testified that she is currently a freelance actress, and this varies from once a year to working five times a year, one short start project, or one six-month project. In total the plaintiff testified that an amount of R500 000 will be sufficient for both minor children and her,” reads the judgment.

He also said Mlotshwa’s career had suffered after Black Coffee told her he was not comfortable about her smooching her fellow male actors on set.

“The defendant was no longer comfortable with her taking kissing scenes. She testified that majority of the time she was not working. In order to keep peace in the household, she looked after the house, packing the defendant’s clothes, fed him, and massaged the defendant’s injured hand,” Ntanga wrote.

“The plaintiff testified that they started having difficulties in their marriage and averred that the defendant had extra-marital affairs, which resulted in the defendant having children outside of their marriage. Both parties confirmed that their marriage relationship has irretrievably broken down and that there are no prospects of restoring it to a normal marriage relationship.”

Ntanga said Black Coffee testified that when he met her, she was driving a rusty bucket. “When the plaintiff got pregnant, she drove this vehicle, and he decided to buy her a new car the same year. He believes that the comments about him being a millionaire originate from this,” the judge stated.

“Regarding maintenance of the minor children, the defendant testified that he pays R50 000 every month in addition to school fees. He made an example of the amount of R300 000 he pays for school fees for one of the children. He testified that one of the children is in the racing academy, and the fees for that are R1-million. He testified that he pays R48 000 for security in the house where the plaintiff and the children reside. He disputed the plaintiff’s claim of R500 000 for maintenance,” wrote Ntanga.

(Sunday world)



Khaya Mthethwa ties the knot again

KHAYA Mthethwa is once again off the market. The pastor and gospel musician surprised fans and followers with the announcement of his new wife.

Mthethwa tied the knot with fitness and travel content creator, Sine Ndlovu, popularly known as sneryboo.

The couple tied the knot in a small and intimate affair at Oasis Church in Umlazi, south of Durban.

Videos of the affair were shared on social media, with friends and family wishing the couple well.

In the videos, the church was filled with jubilation as the couple was announced and revealed.

As the couple exchanged nuptials, Mthethwa was fitted in a tuxedo while his wife wore a white lace mermaid dress and veil. They also wore matching traditional outfits.

Mthethwa shared a picture of himself and his wife wearing their traditional wedding outfits on his Instagram page.

The picture was captioned, “Sthandwa sami”, which simply translates to “My love”. This is the second time that the pastor is trying his hand at love and marriage.

He was married to former Miss South Africa, Ntandoyenkosi Kunene Radzuma, in 2017. The couple, who share a son, shocked many in 2019 with the announcement of their divorce.

Rumours of infidelity swirled around the couple, but Mthethwa staunchly refuted those allegations.

Kunene Radzuma tied the knot this year with a local businessman in July.

After his divorce, Mthethwa candidly opened up about the experience and his heartbreak in a podcast interview on the “Podcast, Radio & Stuff” platform.

“I think that it is the most painful thing I have ever gone through in my life. I don’t wish divorce on anyone.

“In actual fact, I will never divorce again,” he shared, highlighting the emotional turmoil that accompanied the end of his marriage.

(IOL)



New Miss SA Qhawekazi Mazaleni champions education

EASTERN Cape beauty queen and speech therapist Qhawekazi Mazaleni has been crowned the 67th Miss South Africa in a glittering ceremony held at SunBet Arena, Times Square, in Tshwane on Saturday.

The event was hosted by presenters Noma-linga Shoji and Pamela Mtanga, with judges made up of actress Cindy Mahlangu, Dr Tamaryn Green-Nxumalo, journalist Heidi Giokos, and strategist Thebeetsile Ikalafeng.

Mazaleni took over the crown handed down by Miss SA 2024, Mia le Roux. The runners-up

Luyanda Zuma (23) from Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal was crowned first princess, and Karabo Mareka (27) from Alexandra in Johannesburg was the second princess.

Mazaleni comes top among nine finalists, after one participant, Lebohlang Msimang, withdrew for the pageant after much thought and “deep reflection.”

The 24-year-old Mazaleni demonstrated her strength with her closing words, touching on the need for women empowerment and access to education among youth.

“I want to champion inclusive education. This role means you are not just Miss SA, you are an agent of change in the country.”

Mazaleni hails from the oceanic suburb of Gonubie, in the Eastern Cape. She now resides in the north of Johannesburg.

She holds a degree in Speech, Language, and Hearing Therapy from Stellenbosch University. She is currently in the process of completing her Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology through the University of Pretoria, with a focus on Autism.

Mazaleni said her focus as the country’s representative would be on women’s empowerment.

She would play a role in tackling youth unemployment, which is at 46.1 percent in South Africa.

She hopes to “bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps in speech therapy and being informed of our political, economic, and social worlds”.

Mazaleni is the author of an isi-Xhosa children’s book, titled Amasele Amdaka, inspired by a patient with cerebral palsy.

She walks off with a prize package worth over R3 million, including a R1 million cash prize, a Mercedes-Benz GLC Coupé, and an upmarket three-bedroom penthouse, brand endorsements, travels, and local and international events.

(Sunday world)



▲ Eastern Cape beauty queen and speech therapist Qhawekazi Mazaleni has been crowned the 67th Miss South Africa in a glittering ceremony held at SunBet Arena, Times Square, in Tshwane on Saturday.

What Are Pumpkin Seeds?

PUMPKIN seeds are edible seeds from pumpkins and other varieties of gourd squash.

The seeds are cream colored, flat, and oval with a nutty, slightly sweet flavor. They are roasted, salted, and eaten as a snack in many parts of the world.

You can scoop seeds out of a carving pumpkin and roast them yourself or buy roasted pumpkin seeds from a grocery or health food store. You may see them labeled “pepitas.” Pumpkin seeds and pepitas are basically the same thing except that pepitas have their cream-colored shells (hulls) removed and they come from specific varieties of pumpkin.

Pumpkins are native to Central and South America, and have been used by Native Americans for centuries as food, as well as medicine. Pumpkin seeds are filled with nutrients, such as unsaturated fats like omega-3s and minerals like magnesium.

Because they are so nutritious, pumpkin seeds have a long history of use dating back to the Oaxaca Highlands of Mexico over 7,500 years ago. Across many cultures, they’ve been used as a folk remedy to treat:

- Urinary tract and bladder infections
- High blood pressure and blood sugar
- Kidney stones
- Parasites like intestinal worms
- Pumpkin seed oil

Pumpkin seed oil is either steam distilled or cold pressed from pumpkin seeds. It’s a dark green oil that’s a rich source of polyunsaturated fats and antioxidants (substances that fight cell damage), such as polyphenols and carotenoids. You can use it for cooking, baking, as well as in marinades and salad dressings. Or, you can find it as capsules to take as a supplement or serum to put on your skin or hair.

You can buy pumpkin seed oil in different forms from grocery and health food stores.

Health Benefits of Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds are a rich source of protein, unsaturated fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals that may reduce your risk of getting chronic diseases, such as cancer.

Some potential health benefits include:

Anti-inflammatory effects

Pumpkin seeds are rich in many antioxidants, which protect your cells from disease-causing damage and reduce inflammation in your body. When they have their hulls, they’re also a great source of dietary fiber, which can boost this effect. Studies show that anti-inflammatory foods can help you prevent chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Anti-cancer properties

Laboratory studies show that pumpkin seeds can stop the growth of breast and prostate cancer cells. They may also kill cancer cells by triggering them to apoptosis, or cancer cell death. Researchers think that the anti-cancer activity of pumpkin seeds may be due to the high antioxidant levels in the seeds. But more research is needed to see how pumpkin seeds work in people to stop cancer cells from growing or to kill cancer cells.

Improved prostate health

Several studies have shown that pumpkin seeds may help ease the symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). BPH is a condition where your prostate gland is swollen. This can cause it to press against your urethra and irritate your bladder. People



Pumpkin seeds

● How healthy are they?

with BPH may feel as if they have to pee all the time or they may be unable to completely empty their bladder.

But medicines that treat BPH, such as alpha-blockers and 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors (5ARIs), can have side effects like sexual function disorders that may not go away even if you stop taking the medicine. One study from 2022 included 130 people assigned male at birth (AMAB). This study showed that 500 milligrams of pumpkin seed extract twice a day reduced lower urinary tract symptoms from BPH and improved overall quality of life. Yet, it didn’t change the scores on a sexual health satisfaction questionnaire.

Ease the symptoms of overactive bladder

A couple of studies have shown that pumpkin seed oil can improve the symptoms of overactive bladder. Overactive bladder makes you need to pee suddenly and often. Some people may need to get up from bed to pee several times at night. In one study, 45 people with overactive bladder took 10 grams of pumpkin seed oil per day for 12 weeks, and their symptoms improved on a questionnaire. In another study, 117 people who were assigned female at birth (AFAB) took a combination of pumpkin seed oil, sumac bark, and hops extract for 12 weeks. The number of times they needed to pee decreased, both during the day and at night, and their quality of life significantly improved.

Healthy heart function

The high magnesium content in pumpkin seeds helps lower your blood pressure and keep it steady. Thanks to this effect, diets high in magnesium are linked to a lower risk

of stroke and death from heart disease.

Studies show that the antioxidants in pumpkin seeds also increase nitric oxide levels in your body. This molecule works to keep your blood vessels smooth, flexible, and healthy, improving blood flow and reducing the risk of heart and circulation problems.

Better sleep

Snacking on pumpkin seeds before bed may help you get a better night’s rest. Pumpkin seeds are a natural source of tryptophan, an amino acid that promotes sleep. The zinc, copper, and selenium in pumpkin seeds can also affect sleep duration and quality. Finally, studies show that magnesium can help reduce stress and anxiety, contributors to insomnia.

Improved sperm count

A study in mice that had lost the ability to produce sperm due to treatment with a chemotherapy drug showed that pumpkin seeds helped restore their ability to make sperm. The mice ate 200 milligrams of pumpkin seed extract per kilogram of body weight every day for 40 days. Researchers think that the antioxidants in the seeds helped prevent some of the damage from the chemotherapy drug. These results are promising as a way to help people who take chemotherapy keep their fertility. But more research is needed to see if it will work this way in people.

Pumpkin Seed Nutrition

Pumpkin seeds are rich in protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and polyunsaturated fats. Polyunsaturated fats are the “good” fats that the American Heart Association recommends as a replacement for foods with saturated and trans fats.

Polyunsaturated fats can help lower your bad cholesterol levels, which may help prevent heart disease and strokes. Polyunsaturated fats can also provide essential fats that your body needs but can’t make, such as omega-6 and omega-3 fats. One serving of pumpkin seeds has about 2.5 grams of omega-6 and 22 milligrams of omega-3 fat. In addition, the protein in pumpkin seeds is a high-quality protein, like soy protein, that has all your essential amino acids. Pumpkin seeds are also an excellent or good source of the following minerals:

- Phosphorous
- Potassium
- Magnesium
- Calcium
- Iron
- Zinc
- Sodium
- Manganese
- Copper

Nutrients per serving

A serving of 1 ounce of whole roasted pumpkin seed kernels contains:

- Calories: 126
- Fat: 5.5 grams
- Protein: 5.3 grams
- Carbohydrates: 15.3 grams
- Fiber: 5.2 grams

One thing to be aware of is that pepitas don’t have as much fiber as pumpkin seeds, since the hulls have been removed. Most of the fiber is in the hulls. Hulled seeds have about 1.8 grams of fiber per serving.

Portion sizes

Pumpkin seeds are tasty and easy to overeat. Because they’re high in calories, limit your portions to the recommended serving size of 1 oz, which is a little less than a quarter-cup.



How to Eat Pumpkin Seeds

One easy way to make your own pumpkin seeds is to scoop the seeds from inside a whole pumpkin. Rinse or soak the seeds to get rid of the stringy orange flesh that surrounds them. You can eat the stringy flesh, too, if you want. But if you don't care for the texture, soaking the seeds for a couple of hours can make your job easier.

You can eat them raw, or, toss with about a tablespoon of olive oil, spread them out on a cookie sheet, and bake in a 300 F oven for 30-40 minutes. Roasting the seeds makes them easier to digest, increases their antioxidant levels, and makes them even more delicious.

You can also find pumpkin seeds with or without their hulls at grocery and health food stores. If you're buying them from the store, check the ingredients because they may have added salt and sugar. Eat pumpkin seeds out of hand as a snack or use them as a nutritious garnish for salad or soup. You can also substitute pumpkin seeds in any recipe where you might use sunflower seeds or pine nuts.

Some ideas for ways to add pumpkin seeds to your diet include:

- ▶ Add them to your smoothies
- ▶ Mix them into granola, yogurt, or cereal
- ▶ Use them to garnish any meal, like chicken or pasta dishes
- ▶ Blend them with other ingredients in a dip like hummus, pesto, or guacamole
- ▶ Bake them into cookies and breads

What is the healthiest way to eat pumpkin seeds?

The healthiest way to eat pumpkin seeds is to roast them yourself from a whole pumpkin. Pumpkin seeds that are straight from the pumpkin are lower in sodium and have more minerals than the ones you buy at the grocery store. So, your second best option is to buy unsalted, raw seeds in their hulls from the grocery or health food store.

Pumpkin seeds do have a lot of a chemical called phytic acid, which can bind to mineral nutrients in your digestive system and keep you from absorbing them as well. You can reduce the phytic acid content by soaking or sprouting your seeds before you eat or roast them.

To soak your seeds:

- ▶ Pick through to remove any debris and rinse them until the water runs clear.
- ▶ Put them in a bowl or jar and add about 2-3 times as much cool water. For instance, for 2/3 cup of seeds, add 1 1/3 to 2 cups of water. Stir so that all the seeds come into contact with the water.
- ▶ Soak the seeds at room temperature for 1-4 hours.
- ▶ Eat them right away or store them in the refrigerator.

To sprout your seeds:

- ▶ Soak them first as described above.
- ▶ After they have soaked, drain and rinse them and then add the same amount of fresh water.
- ▶ Soak for 8-12 hours in an area with good air circulation. A corner of your kitchen counter is fine. Your goal is to get the seeds to start germinating but not to fully germinate.
- ▶ You may need to drain, rinse, and soak them again for another 8-12 hours until the hull bulges.
- ▶ Drain and rinse, and then use them right away or store them in the refrigerator.
- ▶ Use soaked or sprouted seeds just as you would any pumpkin seeds. Roast or toast them in the oven and then eat them out of hand or add them to your favorite recipes.

WebMD

6 immune system busters & boosters

YOUR lifestyle can affect how well your immune system can protect you from germs, viruses, and chronic illness.

Replacing bad health habits with good ones can help keep your immune system healthy. Check this list to see where you could use some improvement.

1. You're short on sleep.

You may have noticed you're more likely to catch a cold or other infection when you're not getting enough sleep. Studies help bear out that well-rested people who received the flu vaccine developed stronger protection against the illness.

Not getting enough sleep can lead to higher levels of a stress hormone. It may also lead to more inflammation in your body.

Although researchers aren't exactly sure how sleep boosts the immune system, it's clear that getting enough - usually 7 to 9 hours for an adult - is key for good health.

2. You don't exercise.

Try to get regular, moderate exercise, like a daily 30-minute walk. It can help your immune system fight infection.

If you don't exercise regularly, you're more likely to get colds, for example, than someone who does. Exercise can also boost your body's feel-good chemicals and help you sleep better. Both of those are good for your immune system.

3. Your diet is off.

Eating or drinking too much sugar curbs immune system cells that attack bacteria. This effect lasts for at least a few hours after downing a couple of sugary drinks.

Eat more fruits and vegetables, which are rich in nutrients like vitamins C and E, plus beta-carotene and zinc. Go for a wide variety of brightly colored fruits and vegetables, including berries, citrus fruits, kiwi, apples, red grapes, kale, onions, spinach, sweet potatoes, and carrots.

Other foods particularly good for your immune system include fresh garlic, which may help fight viruses and bacteria, and old-fashioned chicken soup. If you do come down with a cold or the flu, a bowl of chicken soup can help you get well faster, one study shows. Some mushroom varieties -- such as shiitake -- may also help your immune system.

To fend off germs, should you take a bunch of vitamins? What can you do to keep from getting sick?

4. You're always stressed.

Everyone has some stress; it's part of



life. If stress drags on for a long time, it makes you more vulnerable to illness, from colds to serious diseases. Chronic stress exposes your body to a steady stream of stress hormones that suppress the immune system. You may not be able to get rid of your stress, but you can get better at managing it.

- ▶ Learn to meditate.
- ▶ Slow down.
- ▶ Connect with other people.
- ▶ Work out to blow off steam.
- ▶ Counseling is a big help, too.

Easing stress lowers levels of a stress hormone. It also helps you sleep better, which improves immune function.

People who meditate regularly may have healthier immune system responses, some studies show. In one experiment, people who meditated over an 8-week period made more antibodies to a flu vaccine than people who didn't meditate. And they still showed an increased immune system response 4 months later.

5. You're too isolated.

Having strong relationships and a good social network is good for you.

People who feel connected to friends - whether it's a few close friends or a large group - have stronger immunity than those who feel alone, studies show.

In one study, lonely freshmen had a weaker immune response to a flu vaccine than those who felt connected to others.

Although there are many other things that affect your health, making meaningful connections with people is always a good idea.

6. You've lost your sense of humor.

Laughing is good for you. It curbs the levels of stress hormones in your body and boosts a type of white blood cell that fights infection.

Just anticipating a funny event can have a positive effect on your immune system. In one study, men were told 3 days in advance that they were going to watch a funny video. Their levels of stress hormones dropped.

WebMD

NEWS IN PICTURES



▲ U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), New York City mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani, and U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) wave to their supporters during a “New York is Not For Sale” rally at Forest Hills Stadium, in the Queens borough of New York City.



▲ A person dressed as a Catrina participates in the annual Catrinas Day Parade, ahead of the Day of the Dead, in Mexico City.



▲ A child dressed as Pennywise, the clown from Stephen King’s “It,” walks around a fountain during a Halloween trick-or-treat event in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.



▲ A woman walks along a flooded street amid rain caused by Tropical Storm Melissa, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.



▲ Thailand’s Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and Cambodia’s Prime Minister Hun Manet shake hands next to U.S. President Donald Trump.



▲ Cast member Sydney Sweeney attends the premiere for the film Christy during the AFI Fest in Los Angeles.

Timber warns Premier League leaders Arsenal against complacency

Jurrien Timber urged Arsenal “not to get too high” after they extended their lead at the top of the Premier League.

On a weekend where title rivals Liverpool, Manchester City and Chelsea all lost, the Gunners beat Crystal Palace 1-0 to move four points clear of shock second-placed team Bournemouth.

Arsenal’s seventh consecutive victory in all competitions put them six points in front of City and seven ahead of reigning English champions Liverpool.

The victory over capital rivals Palace also capped a fine week for Mikel Arteta’s men, who also posted a third successive Champions League win with a 4-0 rout of Atletico Madrid.

There are increasing hopes among the Gunners’ faithful that Arsenal may be on their way to ending their long wait for the Premier League title. The club were last crowned champions of England back in the 2003/04 season.

But Arsenal defender Timber said: “It is good to stay neutral, and not to get too high.

“Obviously, we’ve been doing well, but it’s still early in the season, and we just have to keep getting better game by game.”

The 24-year-old Netherlands international added: “The next game is already in three days, which is a (League) Cup match (against Brighton), and the next Premier League game (against Burnley) is going to be tough as well.

“So, let’s keep our feet on the ground and keep working hard, and then from there, we’ll see what happens.”



▲ Jurrien Timber.

Arsenal’s impressive start to the season has been built on a miserly defence which has conceded just three goals in their opening 13 games across all competitions, with the clean sheet against Palace their fifth in succession.

“Everyone plays a part in it, but it’s a good thing and a good foundation to build on,” said Timber. “From that standard, you just have to keep getting better and be consistent in what we do, and then throughout

the whole season, hopefully we’ll turn it into something beautiful.

“It gives you confidence and it shows that we’re doing really well, and also, if it’s for multiple games in a row, it says something about consistency.

“We just have to keep improving, and look at what we can do better, but also take that feeling with you, that confidence and go into the next game with the same mindset.” (Supersport)

Michael Brennan, 23, wins Bank of Utah title to gain tour card

MICHAEL Brennan wrapped up an unforgettable week with a 5-under-par 66 on Sunday to seal his runaway win at the Bank of Utah Championship in Ivins, Utah.

Brennan, 23, received a sponsor’s exemption this week to make his third PGA Tour start, and his first since turning pro. The win guarantees him a full tour card for the next two years.

That inexperience didn’t cause any nerves for the youngster, who credited his resolve to the people around him.

“I was probably more nervous eating breakfast this morning,” he cracked.

But it feels amazing. I get that belief from my family and friends, my team. I mean, Jeff, my caddie believes in me I think more than anyone, maybe other than my parents.”

Brennan finished at 22-under 262 over four days at Black Desert Resort, which left him four strokes clear of the Philippines’ Rico Hoey (67 Sunday). The Wake Forest product seized the lead in the second round and kept it Saturday thanks to a round of 64.

On Sunday, Brennan stuck his approach at the par-4 second hole to



▲ Michael Brennan.

3 feet and his tee shot at the par-3 third to 6 1/2 feet to set up his first two birdies. He made five of his seven birdies on the front nine as he sped away from the pack and became the seventh player since 1970 to win a PGA Tour event within his first three starts.

Talking about his game’s improvement, Brennan said, “A lot of mental maybe fortitude or focus has gotten a lot better. Definitely been some technical things that have improved a lot around the green and on the green. I think that showed this

week.” Brennan gets to bypass the Korn Ferry Tour, where he was set to play in 2026. He received Korn Ferry eligibility by placing No 1 in the Fortinet Cup standings on the third-tier PGA Tour Americas this season.

“It really hasn’t set in. It’s an amazing feeling, really an amazing feeling. Winning golf tournaments is one of the better feelings in the world. I mean, it takes a lot to play professional golf, and I just have such a great team behind me.” (Supersport)

Mbeumo brace helps United sink Brighton

CAMEROON striker Bryan Mbeumo took his Premier League goal tally to five this season after scoring twice for Manchester United in a 4-2 win over Brighton at the weekend.

His first goal gave United a three-goal lead and the second sealed a third consecutive league win for the first time under manager Ruben Amorim.

Mbeumo, 26, joined United from Brentford in the close season after launching his professional career with Troyes. He represented France at age-limit levels before switching his allegiance to Cameroon.

AFP Sport highlights African headline-makers in the major European leagues:

ENGLAND

BRYAN MBEUMO (Manchester United)

Mbeumo scored his first goal in the 61st minute, squeezing a low shot through Brighton defender Lewis Dunk’s legs and past ‘keeper Bart Verbruggen at his near post. His second arrived in stoppage-time when he finished off Ayden Heaven’s pass.

MOHAMED SALAH (Liverpool)

The Egypt forward ended his goal drought but still couldn’t stop the troubled champions slumping to a 3-2 defeat at Brentford. Salah grabbed his first goal in seven matches to make it four for the season. It was a sweetly-struck finish from Dominic Szoboszalai’s 89th-minute cross.

PAPE SARR (Tottenham)

The Senegal midfielder put the seal on his third-placed team’s 3-0 win at Everton with the final goal. Sarr netted with a close-range header after Richarlison nodded the ball into his path in the 89th minute.

LYLE FOSTER (Burnley)

The South Africa striker scored for the first time since August to seal Burnley’s dramatic 3-2 win at Wolves. The Clarets had blown a two-goal lead when Foster struck with a cool finish from Tunisian Hannibal Mejbri’s pass in the fifth minute of stoppage time.

SPAIN

DAVID CARMO (Real

Oviedo)

The Angolan centre-back blasted home from close range in the 97th minute to rescue Oviedo a point on the road against Girona in a crunch La Liga relegation clash between the two teams at the bottom. Carmo, on loan at Oviedo from Nottingham Forest, was able to celebrate only the third top flight goal of his career to seal a 3-3 draw.

AZZEDINE OUNAH (Girona)

Morocco midfielder Ounahi joined Girona in the close-season and has two goals in his last three games for the club after scoring off the bench against Real Oviedo. The 25-year-old was sidelined for the previous match against Athletic Bilbao and the team missed him, but he made a quick impact on his return with a fine strike from outside the area.

GERMANY

YAN DIOMANDE (RB Leipzig)

Leipzig winger Diomande was the first of six scorers in a 6-0 Bundesliga romp at Augsburg, while laying on two assists. With 10 minutes gone, the 18-year-old Ivorian collected a pass from Romulo and squeezing the ball inside the near post for his first Bundesliga goal.

EDMOND TAPSOBA (Bayer Leverkusen)

Centre-back Tapsoba scored in the second half as Leverkusen cruised to a 2-0 home win over Freiburg. With Leverkusen leading, the Burkina Faso international rose to nod an Alejandro Grimaldo cross into the net.

FRANCE

ACHRAF HAKIMI (Paris Saint-Germain)

African Player of the Year contender Hakimi scored twice as PSG won 3-0 at Brest to regain first place in Ligue 1. The Morocco captain and defender has been included in a 10-man shortlist for the award and he and Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah are the favourites. Hakimi scored with a low shot on 29 minutes and struck again before half-time with a shot into the roof of the net.

(Supersport)



▲ Cameroon striker Bryan Mbeumo.

Verstappen closes the gap after unexpected podium finish

Max Verstappen did not expect to finish on the podium at the Mexico City Grand Prix after his struggles in qualifying so the Dutchman was not overly disappointed that a late virtual safety car denied him the chance to turn his third place into second.

McLaren's race winner Lando Norris moved one point clear of teammate Oscar Piastri at the top of the standings, with Red Bull's Verstappen closing the gap at the top to 36 points from 40 coming into Sunday's race.

The four-time world champion started fifth on the grid after complaining of a lack of grip in Saturday's qualifying but the Dutch driver finished less than a second behind Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, who was struggling with his tyres at the end.

A virtual safety car on the penultimate lap, deployed when Carlos Sainz spun and stopped with smoke coming from his Williams, came as a godsend for Leclerc.

"Sometimes the safety car works for you, and sometimes it works against you," said Verstappen.

"Would have been fun, I think, to the end. Well, maybe a bit more fun for me than for Charles defending, but it would have been a fun ending for everyone to watch.

Verstappen did an extended first stint on medium tyres before switching to softs while his rivals made earlier pit stops. The strategy paid dividends as he moved past Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton, after an early battle, on lap 47.

He then climbed to third when several drivers, including Mercedes' George Russell, Piastri and Haas's Oliver Bearman, made second stops.

"Personally, I didn't expect to be on the podium," Verstappen told reporters. "I think even in the first stint, it was not really looking like it. At the time, I thought we were just slow and struggling on tyres.

"Once we bolted on the softs, we were a little bit more competitive, a bit happier," he added.

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▲ Max Verstappen.

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(Supersport)

Cardoso braced for tougher Champions League challenge

MAMELODI Sundowns coach Miguel Cardoso believes his side will face a sterner test in the group stages of the CAF Champions League after comfortably dispatching Remo Stars 7-1 on aggregate to reach the next round.

Cardoso caution

The Brazilians head into the group phase with confidence but also caution, as Cardoso reminded his players of how quickly fortunes can shift in Africa's premier club competition.

Last season, Sundowns cruised past Mbabane Swallows 8-0 over two legs to qualify for the group stage but were drawn into a tough pool alongside Moroccan powerhouses AS FAR and Raja Casablanca, as well as DR Congo's Maniema Union. Their campaign nearly ended prematurely after two opening draws against Maniema and AS FAR before a late surge saw them advance.

"Sometimes you think you'll play a team that doesn't have a [big] name but when you play them away, it becomes so difficult," Cardoso warned.

"I would like people to remember that last year, the worst team theoretically was Maniema Union and we played a draw in the first match at home and it made it difficult on what will happen throughout the competition, especially when we had AS FAR and Raja Casablanca in the



▲ Mamelodi Sundowns coach Miguel Cardoso.

group.

"You remember with me that with five minutes left against Maniema, we were losing 1-0 and we were out of the group stages but Peter Shalulile scored two goals and we went through. We played the decisive match at home to AS FAR, a draw which was enough for us to go through."

The draw for the group stage will take place on November 3 in Johannesburg, with Sundowns the only South African club left in the competition after Orlando Pirates were knocked out by St Eloi Lupopo.

'Very tricky'

"I expect a draw that can be very tricky, as I see big teams that are po-

werful and are impactful," Cardoso concluded.

"There are also teams that don't have (big) names but they are tricky to play, especially away, so we need to take competition seriously. To play in the Champions League, you need to bring the level of your game to the maximum and (still) raise it."

Meanwhile, Kaizer Chiefs and Stellenbosch FC are also through to the group stages of CAF's second-tier competition, the Confederation Cup. All sixteen winners from the qualifying rounds of both competitions will be drawn into four groups of four teams.

(Supersport)

Pirates shift focus to domestic trophies after Champ League exit

ORLANDO Pirates, having been knocked out of the CAF Champions League, will be eager to deliver a quick response when they face Magesi FC on Tuesday evening.

The Buccaneers will meet Dikwena tša Meetse in a Carling Knockout Cup quarterfinal match at the Orlando Stadium

Saint-Eloi Lupopo of the Democratic Republic of Congo knocked Pirates out of the CAF Champions League after defeating them on penalties in the second preliminary round.

After suffering a 3-0 defeat in the first leg away in Lubumbashi, the Buccaneers produced

a spirited fightback at home at the Orlando Stadium this past Saturday, winning the second leg 3-0 to level the tie before ultimately falling short in the penalty shootout.

Yanela Mbuthuma missed the final kick as Lupopo held their nerve to advance to the group stages of the competition.

Following the disappointing end to the CAF Champions League journey, Pirates must quickly regroup as they turn their attention to the Carling Knockout, where they face Magesi, the defending champions of the competition.

(Supersport)



▲ Orlando Pirates coach Abdeslam Ouaddou.

MTN PREMIER LEAGUE 2025/26 REVIEW

Wanderers left in wonder-land

... As Malanti roast Buffaloes to summit, Green Mamba stunned

By Chris Dlamini

THE action continued over the weekend, and it was a weekend of joy and sorrow. Those who got good results had the joy to themselves, while those who got bad results had the sorrow. While some big names were on the sorrowful side, it is Manzini Wanderers who must be having its supporters concerned already is the team building up to yet another relegation season? Time will tell, but after match-day 3, we highlight where the league is.

AT THE SUMMIT:
Malanti Chiefs (1st - 7 points)

- It is either something is not right within the star-studded Young Buffaloes camp or Malanti Chiefs is doing something right.
- In only a space of about two months, Malanti has twice beaten the army side. They knocked Buffaloes out of the 8Bet Trade Fair Cup last in September and now in the league. Thumbs up to Malanti as they took the summit from the army team!

CLOSER TO SUMMIT:
Rangers (2nd - 6 points)

- After their narrow 3-2 defeat on match-day 2 to Moneni Pirates, Rangers was in an uncompromising mood against Manzini Wanderers, beating the struggling hub giants 2-0 to go on six points and second on the table.
Mbabane Highlanders
- As per their player/Chairman Andile Mpisane's declaration that they would beat Amauele, Inkunz'emnyama went ahead and did just that with a 1-0 margin. Their second win in three games took Highlanders to third in the standings with six points, level with Rangers and their traditional rivals Mbabane Swallows who also edged Ubombo Sugar and occupy the fourth spot.

'BIG THREE' UPDATE:
Mbabane Highlanders

- After the narrow and unfortunate 1-0 to defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs on matchday 1, Mbabane Highlanders returned to winning ways, outfoxing Manzini

Sea Birds 2-0 to earn their first three points in two games and then the latest 1-0 win over elite debutants Amauele.

Mbabane Swallows
- They recorded their second and consecutive win in three games, edged a resilient Ubombo Sugar 2-1 ahead of their nail-biting upcoming tie with Royal Leopard. Swallows had a dishevelled start, losing 1-0 to Green Mamba on opening day before rising to beat elite debutants Tabankulu Celtics on match-day 2.

Manzini Wanderers
- 'Change the coach', screamed a Facebook comment in one of the supporters' pages soon after news broke Manzini Wanderers lost again. The maroon and white side remain winless in three matches and this puts head coach Nyanga 'Crooks' Hlophe under pressure. The supporters know their team has been flirting with relegation in recent seasons but successfully challenged it in court when it caught up with them last season. Are they going back to that relegation cesspit again? Time will tell but Wanderers currently has one point on position 15, just above Sisonkhe.

THE UPSETS:
Green Mamba

- They are one team that should always be challenging for honours with the quality and training time they have. However, two games into the season, there appears to be a portion of inconsistency. They just got bullied and whacked by Manzini Sea Birds. The latter was beaten 2-0 by Mbabane Highlanders in their previous match but could not let Green Mamba do the same damage.

Manzini Wanderers
- Credit goes to Rangers for upstaging the big guns, beating Wanderers 2-0 in Nhlanguano. The latter remains winless, a worrying factor given they were being relegated last season.

Moneni Pirates
- The Moneni Buccaneers are seemingly sailing on mucky waters - they have lost two out of three now.

THE GOALS:
- They are coming in drips and draps with no player on a brace or hat-trick yet.
- A total 11 goals were scored over



the weekend from six matches as Royal Leopard and defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs were engaged in the CAF inter-club competitions, the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup and TotalEnergies CAF Champions League respectively in the last two weekends.

THE FANS CORNER:
- The King Sobhuza Stadium in Nhlanguano where Manzini Wanderers played Rangers, and then the Mavuso Sports Centre in Manzini where there was Mbabane Highlanders against Amauele, and Moneni Pirates against Ezulwini United attracted the biggest crowds.

CAF ENVOYS
Nsingizini Hotspurs
- They could not make it past Tanzania's Simba SC, losing 3-0 on aggregate. Interestingly, the 3-0 was inflicted at Somhlolo National Stadium,

um, Nsingizini's backyard, while it was 0-0 in Tanzania on Sunday.

- Nsingizini can now focus on their title defence, which they opened with a narrow 1-0 win over giants Mbabane Highlanders. They return against Ubombo Sugar on November 1, before taking on Green Mamba in their pending matchday 2 fixture on November 5.

Royal Leopard
- The police outfit, runners-up last season, returns to domestic football against Ezulwini United in a mid-week fixture set for Wednesday.

UPCOMING FIXTURES (MATCHDAY 4):

M. Wanderers	vs.	M. Highlanders
R. Leopard	vs.	M. Swallows
Y. Buffaloes	vs.	Rangers
Amauele	vs.	Green Mamba
M. Sea Birds	vs.	T. Celtics
Nsingizini	vs.	Ubombo Sugar
Ez. United	vs.	M. Chiefs
M. Pirates	vs.	Sisonkhe



Govt aims to create a clean sports environment



▲ Minister of Sports, Culture And Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima delivering his remarks during the workshop.

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

THE government has committed itself to ensuring that the country has a safe environment for sports.

Minister for Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima revealed the news during the opening ceremony of the ANOCA Zone VI Olympic values workshop held at Esibayeni Lodge on Monday.

The one-week workshop is attended by delegates from 10 member countries and the ANOCA board member and Botswana National Olympic Committee president, Bot-sang Tshenyego.

Tshenyego is representing the regional body president Alfred Foloko from Malawi.

“Clean sport is at the heart of this philosophy. It protects the integrity of competition, the health of athletes, and the trust that fans place in the games they love. When doping or manipulation enters the field, the spirit of fair play dies a silent death — and so, our collective duty is to guard it with vigilance and conviction. We will continue to align ourselves with international anti-doping standards and policies, ensuring that Eswatini remains part of the global family that upholds transparency, fairness, and accountability in sport. We believe that education is not just a defence against doping, a Zone VI RADO, and the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association for their joint leadership in hosting this initiative,” he said.

Nzima also applauded the various international bodies such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for their collaboration towards the development of sport in the region.

“Your combined efforts speak to a shared belief that the true power of sport lies not only in performance, but in the principles that sustain it — fairness, respect, and integrity,” he said.

The minister also thanked the International Olympic Committee for its continued support for sports development in the country.

“We also extend appreciation to the International Olympic Committee and Olympic



▲ ANOCA Zone VI doping workshop participants with dignitaries led by Minister of Sports, Culture And Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima during the opening ceremony.



▲ Participants following proceedings the workshop.

Solidarity for their continued investment in education and athlete welfare.

The support of the two bodies ensures that our athletes are not only trained for competition but also formed in character and conscience,” he said.

Tshenyego said the workshop will enhance the development of sports in the region.

“We are happy with the workshop as it will help us to groom future champions who will represent the region effectively on the international scene. We are grateful to the Government of Eswatini for supporting this initiative,” he said.

EOCGA President Adam ‘Bomber’ Mthethwa said the workshop is an investment to sports development in the region.

“We are pleased to be part of this workshop as it is a sign of progress towards sports development in the region. We are honoured to host such an important course as a country,” he said.

Workshop to create awareness about doping — Zone VI Athletes Commission

The Zone VI Athletes Commission has welcomed the hosting of the ANOCA Zone VI Olympic values workshop in the country. The regional Commission Chairman, Kgotso Mokoena, said the workshop will create awareness about anti-doping dur-



▲ ANOCA Zone VI athletes commission chairman Kgotso Mokeona.

ing the opening ceremony of the one-week workshop.

“I am pleased to be part of this workshop, which will empower us to be able to educate youngsters about the importance of doping in sport. This will further help to groom professional athletes within our various countries,” he said.

Mokeona is a former South African profes-

sional high jumper, and he represented his country at major international competitions such as the 2008 Olympic Games, among others.

Eswatini Athletes Commission Chairman Sibusiso Matsenjwa also welcomed the workshop. The retired national sprinter said the workshop is an eye opener for the local athletics body.

‘Karas’ makes ‘Bull’ return!

By Chris Dlamini

AS once and recently speculated in one of the Eswatini Daily News’s articles, Mbabane Highlanders beloved, Khayelihle ‘Karas’ Dlamini, is back in the team.

The former left wing forward, renowned for his trademark step-overs and free kick goals, some of which delivered major trophies like the defunct Eswatini Bank Cup and Eswatini Telecom Charity Cup, returns to the club for a second time since he quit several years ago to end his career at Manzini Wanderers. His first comeback was during South African businessman Chief Ally Kgomongwe as a club legend, and now under yet another South African businesswoman Shauwn ‘MaMkhize’ Mkhize’s reign.

This time, he has agreed to be the team’s new Public Relations Officer (PRO). Highlanders had hoped to officially announce him on Monday during the national radio EBIS’ Sport Show programme.

“We had been expecting Highlanders who wanted to announce Karas as their new PRO, but we’ll now engage them in another platform,” said the programme host.

This publication had it from close sources that Karas, a soft-spoken legend of the now black and gold outfit, was one of several other renowned names to serve in the new management committee (MC). Currently representing the team as its spokesman, patron Charles ‘Ace’ Jele recently said they had recommended certain names to MaMkhize, but it was her decision to approve and appoint those she felt could serve her vision. Sought again on Monday, his phone rang unanswered. However, Karas confirmed his appointment.



▲ Khayelihle ‘Karas’ Dlamini in action during a recent tournament.

“I haven’t yet started but I believe the team just wants to make an official unveiling or announcement,” he said.

Predict

Meanwhile, MaMkhize was on Sunday quoted as saying her team was taking things slow and not in a hurry to predict anything.

“It’s too early in the season, and we’re

taking each day and one game at a time,” she responded when interviewed after the win against Amawele. Highlanders had just won 1-0 over elite debutants, Amawele. She was asked if she thought her team could go on and win the league.

Highlanders has played three league matches, lost the first, and won the last two.



▲ Zesco United’s Lindo Mkhonta.

Lindo’s Zesco through to Confederation Cup group stages

By Sibusiso Masilela
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ESWATINI will be represented in the group stages of the 2025 CAF Confederation Cup despite the exit of local envoys Royal Leopards.

The nation will be represented by Sihlangu utility defender Lindo Mkhonta, who is part of the Zesco United squad that beat Jwaneng Galaxy during the second preliminary round.

Zesco secured a 5-4 aggregate win over the Botswana side on Sunday at the Obed Chilume Stadium in Francistown to earn themselves over E7 million incentive for reaching the group stages. Galaxy is the parent club to another foreign based Liswati Mxolisi Mkhonto, who is on loan to Morapule Wanderers.

Happy

The ex-Young Buffaloes defender said he is happy with the team’s latest feat.

“We are pleased with our progression to the group stages of the Confederation Cup and will continue working hard in the next round,” he said. Mkhonta is among the foreign-based local players, which include Justice Figuareido (Chippa United, South Africa), Sizwe Gwebu (Uganda Police), and Banele Ndzabandzaba (Botswana Police XI), among others. The one-time Malanti Chiefs defender was part of the Sihlangu squad during the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers against Angola and Cape Verde under the guidance of interim coach Sifiso ‘Nuro’ Ntibane.

recognition.

Other clubs shortlisted for the CAF Club of the Year accolade include CR Belouizdad and CS Constantine from Algeria, ASEC Mimosas of Ivory Coast, Pyramids FC of Egypt, RS Berkane of Morocco, and three South African clubs being Mamelodi Sundowns, Orlando Pirates and Stellenbosch FC.

Sudanese giants Al Hilal complete the list.

Notably missing this year is last year’s winners Al Ahly of Egypt, 12-time winners of the TotalEnergies CAF Champions League.

Meanwhile, all 10 shortlisted clubs are yet to know the awards date. As the anticipation builds, all eyes will be on the 10 teams as their legacy in African football stands to be cemented.

Simba SC for CAF’s top 2025 gong

By Chris Dlamini

SIMBA SC is a giant in Africa, not just in Tanzania, making Nsingizini Hotspurs away goalless draw a big result for the latter too.

It is a statement result, one that says Nsingizini Hotspurs is yet to be a big challenge to its domestic rivals in Eswatini. Giant clubs like South Africa’s Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates have both been to the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Tanzania but got ambushed, then Nsingizini, only in their fourth elite season, and debutants in the TotalEnergies CAF Champions League 2025/26, got a goalless draw amid the 3-0 aggregate defeat after losing 3-nil at home.

That Nsingizini was up against a big gun continentally has further been justified by the news of Red Lions, as Simba SC is fondly known, getting nominated for the prestigious CAF Club of the Year Award 2025, one of the biggest accolades in African football.

This comes after Simba SC lost 3-1 on



▲ Simba SC player during warm ups at Somhlolo National Stadium.

aggregate in the Confederation Cup final back in March this year to RS Berkane from Morocco. It is also the second time Simba gets shortlisted for this top gong.

They were among shortlisted clubs even last year alongside fellow Tanzania giants

Young Africans (Yanga SC) who were runners-up in the Confederation Cup in 2023 to Algeria’s USM Alger.

It is the two teams’ sustained competitiveness in the interclub competitions that earn them this

