## Eswatini Thursday 13 November, 2025 Daily News



## Eswatini projects E10.4 billion in **SACU** receipts

#### By Thokozani Mazibuko

ESWATINI is set to receive an estimated E10.4 billion in Southern African Customs Union (SACU) receipts for the 2025/26 financial year, a slight decline from the previous year, according to the Midterm Budget Review Report delivered by Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg on Wednesday.

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#### PM urges Limkokwing University to transition to full degree programmes Page 3



▲ Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini flanked by Limkokwing President Datuk Seri Timothy Lim (left) and Minister of Education and Training Owen Nxumalo during the Class of 2025 Graduation Ceremony held at Mavuso Trade and Exhibition Centre on Wednesday.

#### Eswatini economy to grow by 6% in 2025 — Finance Minister



A Rubicon Media Group publication



#### By Thokozani Mazibuko

ESWATINI is set to receive an estimated E10.4 billion in Southern African Customs Union (SACU) receipts for the 2025/26 financial year, a slight decline from the previous year, according to the Midterm Budget Review Report delivered by Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg on Wednesday.

The minister said SACU receipts remain the largest contributor to the country's total revenue, with collections at E5.20 billion at mid-year, compared to E6.53 billion during the same period in the 2024/25 fiscal year.

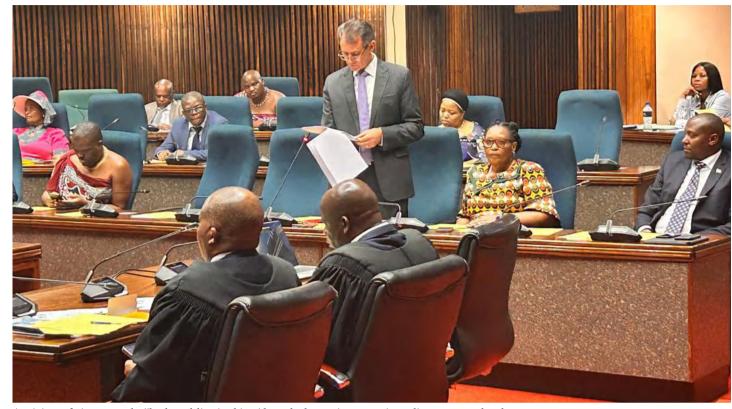
However, Rijkenberg cautioned that while the receipts form a critical pillar of Eswatini's fiscal framework, their volatility and external determination pose a persistent risk to the country's financial stability.

"SACU revenues remain volatile and externally determined, posing a risk to fiscal stability," Rijkenberg told Parliament. "To mitigate this volatility, Government remains committed to building fiscal buffers through allocations to the SACU Stabilization Fund, aimed at smoothing the impact of revenue fluctuations in future years."

The SACU receipts, derived from a shared customs and excise pool among Eswatini, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and Lesotho have historically played a decisive role in shaping the country's budget performance. The projected E10.4 billion, though slightly lower than the previous fiscal year, still represents a major lifeline for Eswatini's revenue base.

Economists have long warned that Eswatini's reliance on SACU transfers leaves the country vulnerable to regional trade slow-downs and global market shocks. Rijkenberg noted that the moderation in regional trade and customs pool performance this year explains the dip in projected receipts.

## Eswatini projects E10.4bln in SACU receipts



▲Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg delivering his midterm budget review report in Parliament on Wednesday.

Despite the decline, the Finance Ministry maintains that prudent fiscal management and continued diversification of domestic revenue sources remain central to Eswatini's medium-term fiscal strategy.

"We are making deliberate efforts to strengthen domestic resource mobilization and improve the efficiency of public spending," Rijkenberg added.

The government's renewed focus on the

SACU Stabilization Fund, a reserve meant to cushion the economy from unexpected revenue drops, is expected to play a key role in managing future fiscal shocks.

Analysts say the move is a prudent one, especially as Eswatini navigates a challenging regional economic environment marked by slower growth and fluctuating customs inflows

The Midterm Budget Review also reaf-

firmed the government's broader economic objectives, including fiscal consolidation, improved public financial management, and investment in productive sectors to stimulate growth and employment.

As SACU receipts continue to dominate the fiscal landscape, Eswatini's ability to manage their unpredictability will be critical in determining the country's economic resilience in the coming years.

#### Eswatini economy to grow by 6% in 2025 — Finance Minister

#### By Thokozani Mazibuko

ESWATINI's economy is projected to post a strong recovery in 2025, expanding by an average of 6 percent, driven largely by infrastructure development and rising regional trade opportunities.

This was revealed by the Minister of Finance, Neal Rijkenberg, when he presented the 2025/26 Mid-Year Budget Review in Parliament on Wednesday.

Rijkenberg told Members of Parliament that the domestic economy is expected to strengthen in the short to medium term, supported by both public and private sector investments, particularly in the construction and manufacturing industries. He said the projected growth follows a revised 3 percent expansion in 2024, signaling renewed economic momentum.

"The growth rate is projected to average 6 percent between 2025 and 2026, following a revised growth estimate of 3 percent in 2024. The expansion will predominantly be attributed to a robust rebound in the tertiary sector and a resilient secondary sector," said Rijkenberg.

The minister highlighted that by 2026, growth is expected to become broad-based, with the construction industry continuing to lead, supported by a recovering manufacturing sector. However, he warned that global uncertainties could still pose significant

risks to Eswatini's growth prospects.

#### Primary sector faces temporary decline

Rijkenberg noted that the primary sector—which includes agriculture, forestry, and mining—is expected to decline by 1.9 percent in 2025 before rebounding strongly by 16.4 percent in 2026.

The downturn will mainly be due to emerging demand challenges in the coal industry, which are expected to dampen mining performance next year.

"In 2026, the primary sector rebound will benefit from increasing agriculture and forestry production, driven by expansions in sugarcane production under the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP II), as well as the recovery of the mining sector," he said.

#### Construction and manufacturing drive growth

The secondary sector, which includes manufacturing and construction, is forecast to increase by 5.7 percent in 2025 and 7.7 percent in 2026, fueled by robust construction activity and a rebounding manufacturing sector.

The tertiary sector, covering services such as trade, transport, and communication, is expected to expand by 6.9 percent in 2025 and 3 percent in 2026, buoyed by higher private consumption, improved public sector



▲Parliament floor.

wages, and increased demand from construction-related activities.

#### Growth to moderate after 2026

Looking further ahead, the Minister said growth will moderate to an average of 2.9 percent between 2027 and 2030, peaking at 4.5 percent in 2028. The slowdown will come as some of the country's mega infrastructure projects are completed, reducing the immediate stimulus to GDP.

Nonetheless, Rijkenberg expressed optimism that sectors such as manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and services will help maintain steady, positive growth during this period.

#### Inflation trends remain stable

Turning to inflation, the Minister reported that core inflation which excludes volatile items like food and fuel remains broadly aligned with headline inflation. As of July 2025, core inflation stood at 3.37 percent, slightly below the Central Bank's forecast of 3.68 percent. He noted that moderation in food and services prices has helped ease inflationary pressures, prompting a downward revision of the inflation outlook for the remainder of 2025.

"The third quarter of 2025 is now revised down to 3.5 percent from 3.7 percent, and the fourth quarter to 3.3 percent from 3.4 percent," Rijkenberg told Parliament.

#### A cautiously optimistic outlook

Despite potential risks from global economic volatility, Rijkenberg said Eswatini's outlook remains broadly positive, with the combination of infrastructure investment, regional trade, and domestic consumption expected to sustain growth.

"While the external environment remains uncertain, we are confident that the domestic economy will remain on a path of steady recovery," he concluded.

The minister's remarks underscore the government's ongoing focus on fiscal stability, economic diversification, and job creation, as Eswatini seeks to build a more resilient and inclusive economy in the years ahead. Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini issued a compelling call to action at the 12th Limkokwing University graduation ceremony, urging the institution to elevate its academic offerings.

He challenged the university to move all its programs to full degree status and establish its own campus within the country, assuring strong government support for students through tuition and allowances. "Move all your offerings to full degrees. Have your own campus as His Majesty's Government is committed to paying tuition and allowances for the students," the Prime Minister declared, emphasising the government's readiness to back this transformation financially and structurally.

He further stressed the importance of academic rigour, instructing the university to align all courses with the standards set by the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC). This move aims to ensure quality and relevance in higher education across the nation. "Let all your courses offered here adhere to the standards set by our regulator, ESHEC," he said, underscoring the role of regulatory oversight in maintaining excellence.

Beyond compliance, the PM challenged Limkokwing University to become a leader in innovation and set exemplary standards for other institutions to follow. "I want to challenge Limkokwing University to lead by example as a school of innovation. Set

### Limkokwing urged to transition to full degree programmes

... Calls on the university to align courses with ESHEC standards



lacktriangle The Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini addressing the graduates during the Class of 2025 Limkokwing University Graduation Ceremony at Mavuso Trade and Exhibition Centre on Wednesday.

standards that are compelling and should be followed by everyone after you," he urged, positioning the university as a pioneering force in the region's educational landscape. He praised the recent introduction of full-time degree programs as a landmark

achievement that broadens access to education and aligns academic offerings with national development priorities. "It demonstrates Limkokwing's commitment to expanding educational access, offering quality and industry-aligned programs that respond directly to the country's development needs and that position graduates for success, both locally and internationally," the Prime Minister noted. **Supporting** 

He also invited the university to relocate its administrative operations to Eswatini, reinforcing the government's commitment to supporting local reinvestment and institutional growth. "I invite Limkokwing University to bring the administration of this institution to the country. As you reinvest locally, the Government commits to supporting the campus in every way possible," he said.

Expressing strong confidence in the university's leadership, Prime Minister Dlamini concluded, "From your track record so far, I am confident that this challenge I place before you will be done, and done well, in no time at all. This is the confidence we have as His Majesty's Government in the leadership of this institution."

#### $\dots$ Entrepreneurial model aligns with Eswatini's economic transformation

Limkokwing University of Creative Technology is rapidly shaping the future of education and youth empowerment in Eswatini, positioning itself as a beacon of innovation, entrepreneurship, and skills development.

This was underscored by Prime Minister Russell Dlamini during the graduation ceremony, where he highlighted the university's pivotal role in advancing the nation's development goals. Addressing graduates and attendees, the premier emphasised that Limkokwing University stands as a key partner in realising His Majesty's vision for Eswatini's transformation. He described the institution as "an established and well-known TVET model institution," committed to producing graduates who are not only academically proficient but also ready to meet industry demands through a unique blend of creativity, technology, and entrepreneurship.

With youth unemployment in Eswatini hovering around 58 per cent, the Prime Minister pointed out the critical importance of institutions like Limkokwing in equipping young people with the mindset and skills transcend traditional employment pathways. "Limkokwing graduates do not have to seek a job, they should create jobs," he asserted, urging the youth to become "fearless innovators who see opportunity where others see obstacles."

#### Nkwe

The Prime Minister linked the university's mission directly to the country's overarching development frameworks, including the National Development Plan, the 'Nkwe' Programme of Action, and the Grand Plan for National Transformation. These strategic plans embody His Majesty's vision for Eswatini to become a first-world country. To achieve this, the government must invest heavily in education, healthcare, wealth creation, and employment opportunities to ensure the well-being of every citizen.

"This noble vision requires that as a government, we must adequately invest in the education of our citizens, provide affordable healthcare, create wealth and employment for all, and ensure the wellbeing of every liSwati," the Prime Minister explained, emphasising the collective responsibility of government, private sector, academia, and citizens in driving national transformation.

A distinctive feature of Limkokwing University's approach is its deliberate integration of entrepreneurial training across all its programmes. This ensures that graduates are not only creative thinkers but also equipped to transform their ideas into sustainable business ventures. The Prime Minister noted that this educational model "aligns perfectly with our national goal of building a Government-led, private-sectordriven economy that creates jobs and wealth for all." Limkokwing's impact extends beyond entrepreneurship; it has played a transformative role in shifting public

attitudes toward vocational and technical education. Once perceived as a secondary option, technical and creative education is now recognised as a strategic pathway to personal and national prosperity. The Prime Minister highlighted that by embracing these skills, "our young people can now drive innovation and productivity across all sectors, making Eswatini more self-reliant and globally competitive."

The university's academic offerings also bolster emerging sectors such as Hospitality, Tourism, and the Arts, while fostering critical skills in Graphic Design, Creative Multimedia, and Digital Technologies. These areas are vital for business transformation and adaptation in a rapidly evolving global market. By employing young professionals as faculty members, Limkokwing fosters a culture of innovation, creativity, and relevance. This youthful and forwardthinking environment ensures that graduates are well-prepared for the demands of the 21st-century economy.



▲ A section of Limkokwing University graduates Class of 2025.



▲ An ariel view of the Class of 2025 graduates on their big day.

## Asilwi nemasontfo – Princess Lindiwe

#### Stories by Delisa Magagula

MINISTER for Home Affairs, HRH Princess Lindiwe, has reiterated that government is not in conflict with churches but seeks to formalise their operations through a unified national policy.

Speaking during a stakeholders' meeting of religious representatives at the Ministry of Commerce Auditorium on Wednesday, the Minister said her Ministry's goal is to ensure all religious institutions operate under one recognised framework.

"We are not fighting with churches. What we want is to formalise and legalise their framework," said the Minister.

Princess Lindiwe explained that the Ministry intends to create a structured mother-board that will guide all churches under one policy. This, she said, will help address the current lack of coordination in the registration and regulation of churches.

The Home Affairs Ministry maintains that its approach is administrative, not spiritual. Officials emphasise that formalisation will safeguard freedom of worship while ensuring accountability and transparency within faith-based organisations.

On Monday the Minister revealed that government will not be regulating churches as a new policy for religious institutions is being developed.

This followed an announcement by the minister that churches' registration will now be under the Ministry of Home Affairs after the enactment of the proposed policy currently being developed through consultations.

The pronouncement by the minister is expected to allay fears that government had plans to regulate churches.

The ministry then held consultations at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade's Auditorium at the Interministerial Building in Mbabane where hundreds of representatives from the different Christian fraternities and denominations gathered for the crucial stakeholder meeting aimed at discussing the development of the comprehensive policy to govern religious institutions in Eswatini.

Princess Lindiwe, in her remarks on the mandate of the meeting, said the ministry's aim was not to regulate churches, but wants churches to continue to operate independently in all aspects, even in terms of the sermons preached.

"We are aware that in some countries churches are regulated such that the kinds of sermons delivered are also regulated by government. In some cases, officers are even sent to stand guard and observe whether services are conducted according to government policy and that is not our aim," said the minister.

She further said their aim was not to impose on the teachings in churches, but churches would continue to regulate themselves.

The minister emphasised that the role played by the ministry was mainly bringing order and churches will continue to be accountable and regulated by their mother bodies. These are Council of Churches, League of Churches and the Conference of Churches.

According to the minister, the Ministry of Home Affairs had given itself an assignment of responsibility.

"Religious institutions lacked order, as there was no clear system as to the number of churches in the country and a comprehensive system that identifies each church under a certain denomination. We are devising a policy that will bring clarity and order," she said.

She further highlighted that while the registration of churches is currently done under the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, which registered denominations as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), this policy would ensure that churches are back under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

"The aim is not to divide churches nor cause conflict, but to make a clear distinction of the churches found in the country and further to create order in the affiliations," she said.

Worth noting is that these engagements were facilitated by the Ministry of Home Affairs to get feedback from churches on how best the policy can address issues of importance in matters of faith and the operations of religious entities therein.



▲ Minister for Home Affairs Princess Lindiwe addressing the different religious bodies gathered at the Ministry of Commerce Auditorium on Wednesday.

#### No data on religions in Eswatini

THE Ministry of Home Affairs has revealed that Eswatini has no verified record of how many religious institutions or denominations exist in the country.

Minister Princess Lindiwe told delegates that this absence of data makes it difficult for government to regulate or even identify all operating churches.

"There is no actual information or census of how many denominations we have. This makes it hard to manage their registration and prevents us from detecting misconduct," said the Minister.

Currently, religious groups register as non-profit companies or voluntary associations, creating gaps in oversight. Without central documentation, the Ministry says it cannot track institutions that may

be registered abroad or operating informally.

According to the 2017 Population and Housing Census, about 89 per cent of emaSwati identify as Christian, but the number of denominations has multiplied rapidly.

The Ministry says a unified policy will help establish a national database of churches and streamline how new institutions are formed and recognised.

Some members of the church institutions have disclosed their reluctance to affiliate with the designated mother bodies.

This follows the assertion by Minister for Home Affairs Princess Lindiwe, who said the ministry will create a religious institution portal, which will include all the registered churches, as provided by the designated mother bodies each church is affiliated to.

These umbrella bodies are the League of Churches, Council of Churches and Conference of Churches. However, some clergymen are of the notion that affiliating under the aforementioned mother bodies is against their religious principles, citing grievances with the umbrella bodies.

Wendy Dlamini, in her submission, said that there were other affiliate bodies outside of the three designated bodies mentioned by the minister.

"Are we sticking to just those three umbrella bodies and those are the ones that are recognised by government as we move to register churches under the Ministry of Home Affairs? This, I question, as I happen to be aware of other bodies in existence," said Dlamini.

#### 'We are not all about weed'

MEMBERS of the Rastafarian community used the Home Affairs meeting to correct misconceptions about their faith, insisting that it should not be defined by marijuana use.

Aymos Zwane said the community believes in one God and promotes peace and respect within society.

He added that Rastafarians felt excluded from the Ministry's draft discussions and wanted formal inclusion in the new

Ngcondvolemnyama Mhlanga, a prominent Rastafarian, said their movement is rooted in African culture and unity.

"We must complement each

other instead of discriminating against each other," he said.

As a symbolic gesture, Mh-

langa presented peaches and

seedlings to the Minister, calling them a gift of peace and growth. Worth noting, Rastafarians have long faced social stigma in

Eswatini due to the illegal status of cannabis.

They told the Ministry that regulation should separate faith identity from criminal essection.

regulation should separate faith identity from criminal association and allow equal recognition alongside other religions.



▲ Members of the Rastafarian community following the proceedings.

## We are not recognised – Muslim community raises concern

MUSLIM representatives attending the Home Affairs stakeholder meeting said they feel unrecognised in Eswatini and excluded from key religious events and privileges.

The Minority faith says it feels overlooked and excluded from national religious frameworks. Lwazi Dlamini A'bdullah Ha, speaking for the Muslim community, said they have long sought engagement with government but felt ignored.

"We are not recognised like other religions. Our children are treated differently in schools because of our dress code, and our marriages are not formally acknowledged under our religious names," said Dlamini.

Muslim representatives added that they have no designated public holiday or recognition of their religious festivals. They said being grouped under one structure with other faiths might undermine their right to practise freely.

In response, the Ministry's Registrar, Stanley Malindisa, assured them that all religions in Eswatini are recognised and welcome to participate fully. He said the forthcoming policy will clarify procedures for registration and equal representation of all faiths.

Meanwhile Dlamini emphasised that Muslims continue to feel sidelined in matters of faith, citing limited accommodation in pub-



▲ Muslim representatives attending the Home Affairs stakeholder meeting said they feel unrecognised in Eswatini and excluded from key religious events and privileges.

lic life.

"Our children are treated differently in schools because of our dress code. We cannot even register marriages under our religious names," he said.

He further noted that the Muslim community is unable to celebrate its religious festivals publicly and fears that being grouped with other faiths under a single governing body could infringe on their freedom of religion.

"Putting us under one umbrella will not work for us. It interferes with how we practise our faith," he added.

Other representatives at the meeting echoed similar concerns about inclusivity. Wendy Dlamini, from the Bahá'í Faith, questioned what the proposed policy would

mean for smaller faith groups that operate outside traditional church structures.

"We would like to understand what is expected of us as a minority religion," she said.

In response, Stanley Malindisa, the Registrar at the Ministry of Home Affairs, assured delegates that all faiths in Eswatini are recognised and welcome, emphasising that the government's goal is to ensure transparency, accountability, and respect for all religious practices.

"No religion is excluded. The idea is to have every institution properly registered and operating within a clear framework," Malindisa said.

The Ministry is expected to continue consultations with various religious bodies before drafting the final policy document.

## Independent faiths question proposed 'one body' system

FAITH groups that operate independently of international councils told the Ministry they are uncertain how the proposed one body structure will apply to them. Representatives said while they support government efforts to bring order, they want assurance that their autonomy will not be compromised.

Currently, most Christian organisations in Eswatini belong to one of three mother bodies the Council of Eswatini Churches, the League of Churches, or the Conference of Churches. Independent or newer ministries often fall outside these networks.t

"We do not affiliate with any council globally. We want to cooperate, but we need to know what this would look like," said ZCC member Mandla Shiba.

The Ministry said the framework would allow every recognised faith to function freely under one regulatory policy, without forcing them to merge with others.

#### Traditional healers call for review of 1953 law

Practitioners want the Witchcraft Suppression Act amended to recognise traditional medicine.

Traditional healers and diviners locally known as tinyanga have urged the Ministry of Home Affairs to review an old law that penalises their work.

During the meeting, practitioners Mathokoza Norman Thwala and President of the Witchdoctors Association, Makhanya Makhanya said the 1953 Witchcraft Suppression Act unfairly criminalises cultural healing practices such as 'kuphengula', a traditional diagnostic consultation.

"The law says if we are found helping or consulting someone, we must pay a fine. We ask government to consider reviewing it because it undermines our heritage," said

They argued that traditional healing plays a significant role in communities, noting that many people still consult herbalists for medical and spiritual help.

Worth noting is that, In Eswatini, traditional healers act within a cultural framework that is largely distinct from modern medicine, although there are discussions about integration and regulation

They operate under beliefs rooted in spiritual healing, ancestral communication, and the use of traditional herbs and practices, but their certificates are not legally recognized as valid for absence from modern employment. The country has older laws against witchcraft and a history of debate between government and healers regarding formal regulation and potential conflicts between traditional and modern healthcare systems.

Meanwhile, the practitioners claimed that none of their patients died during the Covid-19 pandemic, saying this showed the value of indigenous knowledge systems. The Ministry took note of the request, saying traditional practices would be reviewed under the wider religious policy consultations.

#### Churches accused of land grabbing, neglecting communities

DURING discussions, officials and attendees raised alarm about churches established on illegally acquired land or those failing to benefit their communities.

Participants said some churches had been built on land grabbed from widows and the elderly, with others suspected of being fronts for money laundering or illicit trade. Speakers argued that churches should serve the people, not exploit them.

"Some of these churches have become businesses, not places of worship," one participant said.

Several participants also accused some churches of acquiring land through questionable means and failing to contribute to the welfare of local communities.

They said instead of promoting social and moral upliftment, some religious institutions had become commercial entities focused on profit. "There are churches that grab land from widows and the elderly. They take advantage of vulnerable people and use the church as a front for personal gain," said Mandla Shongwe from Nazarene Church.

Other speakers noted that certain churches had been built on land not formally allocated or registered, with little or no consultation with traditional authorities or residents.

"Some of these churches are not even known by the very communities where they operate," another participant said.

Prophet Mandla Simelane, who also attended the meeting, expressed disappointment over what he described as a moral and ethical decline among some church leaders.

"We are heartbroken by the way churches and leaders conduct themselves in our communities. There was a time when churches stood for truth and helped the poor. Today, some have turned into businesses," he said. He added that the absence of clear regulation has made it difficult for communities to differentiate



▲ Some of the various religious members during the meeting.

between genuine ministries and self-serving operations.

"We need order. If the policy brings accountability, then it will help the people who truly want to serve God," he said.

Meanwhile officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs acknowledged the concerns, saying the proposed religious institutions policy aims to formalise operations, ensure transparency in land ownership, and curb practices that exploit the public.

The Ministry said the consultations will continue across regions before the draft policy is finalised and presented to Cabinet for approval.

In addition, the Ministry acknowledged the issue, linking it to the lack of a regulatory framework. The proposed policy would require transparent land registration and proof of community engagement before authorisation.

Officials said churches are expected to be centres of development and moral guidance, not sources of conflict or financial abuse.

Before the Minister's arrival, Home Affairs Communications Officer Mlandvo Dlamini challenged religious leaders on why some large churches are not seen at national prayer events.

He questioned pastors who, despite owning elaborate church buildings, failed to contribute to joint national prayers or support projects commissioned years ago by His Majesty King Mswati III.

Dlamini said the Ministry does not intend to interfere with spiritual matters but expects churches to participate in activities that promote unity.

"We want a regulated framework so every institution is visible, accountable and connected to national development," he

The official added that participation in public worship should reflect the moral leadership that churches claim to uphold. His remarks highlighted the Ministry's broader call for cooperation and responsibility among faith institutions.

Following the Wednesday stakeholder meeting, the Ministry of Home Affairs announced that it will hold regional consultations to gather more input from religious groups across the country.

Officials said submissions from Christians, Muslims, Baha'i members, Rastafarians, traditional healers and independent ministries would all inform the final draft.

The Ministry says the upcoming policy aims to balance religious freedom with accountability, ensuring that every faith group operates legally and ethically.

Once approved, the policy is expected to establish a national register of religious institutions, a code of conduct, and clear guidelines on land use, governance and community service.



## Graduation in pics



▲ Sethu accepting her degree from Minister of Information Communication Technology, Savanna Maziya during the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology Graduation Class of 2025 at Mavuso Trade Centre on Wednesday.



▲ Faculty of Design and Innovation following proceedings.



▲ Asanda accepting her degree from Minister of Labour and Social Security Phila Buthelezi.



▲ Lulama Kunene could not contain her excitement on her big day.



▲ Sibhaca was part of the entertainment at the event.



▲ An ariel view of the throngs of graduands following proceedings.



▲ Bandile Cele (left) with Samukelo Tsabedze on the right posed for our lens.



▲ Graduands following proceedings.



 $\blacktriangle \ Limkokwing \ University \ of \ Creative \ Technology \ graduate \ Owethu \ Dlamini \ with \ her \ family.$ 



#### BUSINESS NEWS



#### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### PMI donates E4.5mln for the construction of 40 houses

HIS Majesty's Government, through the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), has partnered with Philip Morris International (PMI) in a project worth E4.5 million to build 40 houses for vulnerable households across Eswatini. The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to protect citizens living in highrisk areas and to ensure safe, dignified housing for families affected by natural hazards.

#### Why is COP30 pushing global lenders to reform?

BELEM, Brazil — The World Bank and other multilateral development banks (MDBs) are under pressure to offer more help to poor countries being hammered by energy challenges and climate disasters. Here is what you need to know.

#### What are development banks

And what do they do? These banks – which can be domestic or international – are largely funded by national budgets to help tackle development challenges through technical assistance, grants and low-cost loans.

#### US shutdown relief sends stocks higher

LONDON — World stocks rallied on Wednesday as the U.S. Congress looked set to end a federal shutdown, paving the way for an end to a data fog that has fuelled uncertainty over the U.S. economic outlook. The yen was also in the spotlight as its fall to nine-month lows against the dollar prompted more comments from officials.



## Informal businesses drop from 75% to 45%

#### By Delisa Magagula

THE proportion of informal businesses in Eswatini has dropped from 75 per cent to 45 per cent, according to the Director of the MSME Unit under the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Meluleki Dlamini.

Dlamini revealed the figures during the inaugural Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Conference, held at the Royal Villas Hotel in Ezulwini from November 10–13.

The event gathered around 250 delegates, including small business owners, policymakers, financial institutions, and development partners

He said the decline marks significant progress in formalising small businesses and strengthening their role in the national economy.

The findings were drawn from the Finscope Blended MSME Survey Report for Eswatini 2023, compiled with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

"The report notes that the proportion of businesses in the informal sector has decreased from 75 per cent to 45 per cent which is good progress in bringing smaller businesses into the formal sector," Dlamini said.

Dlamini explained that the MSME Policy aims to build on this progress by formalising and scaling up enterprises to increase their contribution to the Gross Domestic Product from less than 5 per cent to 30 per cent.

He added that key priorities include operationalising the Ingelo Certification Scheme, launching a national MSME registry, and expanding access to finance and training for entrepreneurs.

The certification scheme, developed in collaboration with the Eswatini Standards Authority and supported by UNDP, is designed to help MSMEs meet quality standards and access wider markets.

The conference also highlighted the Citizens Economic Empowerment Act, recently passed to promote indigenous participation in key business sectors.

Vice-Chairperson of the Citizen Economic Empowerment Council (CEEC), Thulisile Dladla-Dlamini, said the Act would prioritise emaSwati in government procurement and set aside certain business activities for indigenous citizens. She said the legislation aims to empower marginalised groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, by reserving government contracts valued at less than E8 million for local businesses.

The three-day conference, themed 'Unlocking Opportunities for MSMEs in Eswatini' was organised by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade (MCIT), the Small Enterprises Development Company (SEDCO), and the International Trade Centre (ITC), with sponsorship from First National Bank (FNB).

The opening was officiated by the Prime Minister, His Excellency Russell Mmiso Dlamini, represented by the Minister for Economic Planning and Development, Dr Tambo Gina.

Other dignitaries included the Minister for Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khu-



▲Minister of Commerce Manqoba Khumalo.



▲SMEs Director Meluleki Dlamini.



▲ Delegates in attendance during the SMEs conference. malo, EU Chargé d'Affaires José Becerra and UN Resident Coordinator George Wachira.

In his address, Prime Minister Dlamini commended Eswatini's entrepreneurs for their resilience and innovation, noting that small businesses remain a cornerstone of national development.

"Eswatini's economic future is bright because our people are resilient, innovative, and entrepreneurial by nature. From the young digital innovator in the city to the smallholder agro-processor in rural areas, we see every day the ingenuity that drives this nation forward," he said.

UN Resident Coordinator George Wachira said the UNDP and the Central Bank of Eswatini are developing a Green Taxonomy to encourage environmentally sustainable investments among MSMEs.

Minister Khumalo noted that partnerships with international organisations have been critical in supporting local enterprises and advancing Eswatini's economic empowerment agenda.

EU Chargé d'Affaires José Becerra said the EU remains committed to supporting MSMEs as key drivers of inclusive growth, particularly in creating employment for women and youth.

The conference concluded with renewed commitments to strengthen Eswatini's MSME sector through policy implementation, innovation, and partnerships across government, development agencies, and the private sector.

Entrepreneurs who attended the MSME Conference said the event gave them a rare opportunity to interact directly with policymakers and development partners about the day-to-day

challenges facing small businesses.

For Mbali Shongwe, owner of Mbali Naturals, a local skincare brand based in Manzini, the discussions on formalisation and certification struck a personal chord.

"Most of us started our businesses from home with no guidance on standards or registration. Hearing that there will soon be a national MSME registry and certification support gives me hope. It means we can finally qualify for tenders and stock our products in bigger stores," she said.

Artisan craftsman Musa Dlamini from Nhlangano said access to finance remains a key obstacle

"We have ideas and clients, but banks want collateral that small business owners don't have. I was encouraged to hear that the ministry is working on more flexible financing tools. What we need now is speed we can't wait another five years," he said.

Fashion designer Thandeka Simelane from Mbabane said the conference was a wake-up call for entrepreneurs to embrace digital platforms.

"It's no longer enough to sell at pop-up markets. We have to go online, and we need training to do that properly. The e-commerce strategy can really change how we operate if it's accessible and practical," she said.

Participants said the engagement gave them a sense of inclusion and accountability from government institutions.

Many left calling for regular regional dialogues to ensure that the new policies are not confined to paper but translated into real business growth across the country.

#### By Delisa Magagula

HIS Majesty's Government, through the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), has partnered with Philip Morris International (PMI) in a project worth E4.5 million to build 40 houses for vulnerable households across Eswatini.

The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to protect citizens living in high-risk areas and to ensure safe, dignified housing for families affected by natural hazards. A representative from PMI, Leandra Meyer, is currently in the country assessing progress on the construction sites.

NDMA Chief Executive Officer Victor Lusekwane Mahlalela said the project demonstrates how collaboration between government and the private sector can help reduce vulnerability and strengthen national disaster-response systems.

"We appreciate the support from Philip Morris International. These houses will make a real difference to families who have lived for years in unsafe and exposed conditions. It is an investment not only in infrastructure, but also in human dignity," Mahlalela said.

He added that NDMA is working with local authorities to identify beneficiaries based on vulnerability assessments and exposure to hazards such as floods, landslides, and storms

Construction is being carried out using durable materials suited to the country's climatic conditions, and each home will include water and sanitation facilities.

The E4.5 million contribution equivalent to about US\$250,000 covers building materials, fencing, and basic services for all 40 houses. NDMA will supervise the implementation and ensure compliance with safety and building standards.

Mahlalela said the project forms part of the agency's broader commitment to disaster-risk reduction and recovery.

"Our goal is to make sure that no one is left behind when disasters strike. Building resilience begins with safe shelter," he said.

PMI, a global consumer-goods company headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut, manufactures and sells tobacco and nicotine products in over 180 markets worldwide.

In recent years, the company has expanded its corporate social responsibility programmes in Africa, funding community projects in housing, education, and environmental management.

The Eswatini project follows similar PMI-funded initiatives in other regions, where the company has partnered with local governments and relief agencies to support reconstruction in disaster-affected communities.

According to NDMA, the 40 houses will be allocated to households that lost their homes to severe weather events or are currently living in unsafe dwellings. Priority will be given to elderly persons, widows, and families with children.

Mahlalela said NDMA will continue to seek partnerships to address housing needs across the country.

"This contribution sets an example of how public-private cooperation can deliver practical solutions for our people. We invite more companies to come forward and join hands in building resilience," he said.

The project also aligns with Eswatini's national disaster-management strategy, which emphasises risk mitigation, early-warning systems, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Worth noting, NDMA operates under the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and leads the country's efforts in disaster-response coor-

## PMI donates E4.5mln for the construction of 40 houses



▲A foundation has been laid.



▲Some of the houses to be rebuilt.

dination, humanitarian assistance, and community recovery.

PMI representative Leandra Meyer expressed satisfaction with the project's progress and reaffirmed the company's commitment to social-impact work in Eswatini.

"We are honoured to support the government's mission to protect vulnerable families. Providing safe shelter restores stability and gives people hope," she said.

Work on the houses is already underway, with completion expected in the coming months. Once finished, NDMA will conduct official handovers in partnership with local government and community leaders.

The collaboration between NDMA and PMI marks one of the largest private-sector housing interventions for vulnerable communities in Eswatini in recent years, setting a model for future partnerships aimed at disaster resilience and inclusive development.

Meanwhile, the beneficiaries of the initiative include elderly citizens, child-headed households, people living with disabilities, and families whose homes were destroyed or rendered unsafe by floods and strong winds in recent seasons.

According to the NDMA, the 40 new houses are being built across the Lubombo, Shiselweni, and Hhohho regions areas most affected by recurring storms and heavy rainfall. Each structure is designed to withstand severe weather and provide a safe, dignified environment for families who have been living in temporary or unsafe shelters for years.

Victor Lusekwane Mahlalela NDMA CEO, said the partnership with Philip Morris International (PMI) demonstrates the value of

public-private collaboration in addressing national vulnerabilities.

"These houses represent stability, safety, and the start of a better life for those who have endured hardship," he said.

Mahlalela added that NDMA will continue to identify other high-risk communities requiring relocation or assistance as part of its broader disaster-resilience strategy.

Construction is expected to conclude by early 2026, with local contractors and suppliers engaged to stimulate employment and skills transfer within nearby communities.

NDMA officials will conduct periodic monitoring to ensure quality and accountability throughout implementation. Once completed, the homes will be formally handed over to beneficiaries in coordination with local authorities and traditional leaders.

## Why is COP30 pushing global lenders to reform?

#### **By Simon Jessop**

BELEM, Brazil — The World Bank and other multilateral development banks (MDBs) are under pressure to offer more help to poor countries being hammered by energy challenges and climate disasters. Here is what you need to know:

#### What are development banks And what do they do?

These banks – which can be domestic or international – are largely funded by national budgets to help tackle development challenges through technical assistance, grants and low-cost loans.

They might focus on a single goal, such as subsidizing housing or helping farmers through hard times. However many of the international, or "multilateral", development banks like the World Bank or African Development Bank have broad mandates along the lines of alleviating poverty or driving economic growth.

With typically high credit ratings, these banks can take a long-term view on investment potential and offer more favorable loan terms even at higher risk. This is important for developing countries with less access to capital markets.

#### Why are they being asked to reform?

Basically, countries want the MDBs to move faster and offer more in financing for efforts to help countries cut greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for higher sea levels, hotter days and other challenges that come with a warmer atmosphere.

MDBs play a key role in distributing climate finance – particularly for climate-adaptation projects that may have no clear monetary return on investment beyond the potential to save lives.

But these banks have moved far less money than what U.N. experts say is needed. Last year, MDBs distributed a record \$137 billion



▲ Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva talks with Sidi Ould Tah, President of the African Development Bank, ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 30), in Belem,

in climate finance, with nearly 40 per cent of that going to rich countries and only 30 per cent to adaptation projects.

A U.N. report last week said developing countries would need more than twice that amount – or \$310 billion by 2035 for adaptation alone. For all climate finance, including clean energy projects that bring down carbon emissions, experts estimate the yearly bill will soon be in the trillions.

Many hope the reforms will also draw more private investment to MDB-backed projects. Last year, the banks helped to mobilize another \$132 billion from the private sector for climate action.

#### What's likely to happen at COP30?

Countries at the COP30 summit will be under pressure to show progress on growing climate finance beyond what's been committed. Because countries finance these banks and have officials who sit on the boards, they play a key role in deciding the pace and direction of reform.

On Monday, a group of the largest MDBs issued a statement reaffirming their com-

mitment to "accelerate and scale" support for countries, including guidelines for attracting more private money into nature investments. Many of the groups also detailed new deals in developing countries, including a pledge on Tuesday by the European Investment Bank of \$350 million to boost women-led businesses and renewables in the Amazon region.

#### What has the World Bank done so far?

The Washington-based World Bank, central to reform efforts, is considering a series of changes as part of a so-called Evolution Roadmap toward increasing lending capacity and speeding up approvals.

Some ideas include making sustainability and resilience criteria for lending, or prioritizing projects aimed at securing essential public goods. The bank's reform effort has been complicated this year by its biggest shareholder, as the United States pushes back on the bank's remit including climate action and calls for a refocusing on poverty reduction and economic development. (Reuters)



▲Japanese yen and U.S. dollar banknotes.

#### Dollar slides, euro and yen gain

#### **By Karen Brettell**

THE U.S. dollar weakened against the euro and yen on Tuesday on concerns about the deteriorating U.S. labor market after a report showed that private employers cut jobs last month.

ADP Research said on Tuesday that its preliminary estimates show that private employers shed an average of 11,250 jobs a week in the four weeks ending October 25.

It comes as the federal government moves closer to reopening, which will unleash a flood of economic data that may point to a slowing economy.

"When the government is closed, the news stream is non-existent. With the government going to reopen, I think we're going to begin seeing more cracks," said Marc Chandler, chief market strategist at Bannockburn Global Forex in New York.

The U.S. Senate approved a compromise on Monday that would end the longest government shutdown in U.S. history, breaking a weeks-long stalemate that has disrupted food benefits for millions, left hundreds of thousands of federal workers unpaid and snarled air traffic.

It next heads to the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, where Speaker Mike Johnson has said he expects to pass it on Wednesday and send it on to U.S. President Donald Trump to sign into law.

Goldman Sachs expects the Bureau of Labor Statistics to publish a new data schedule between November 13 and 17, assuming the government reopens later this week. The government may also publish its September employment report a few days after reopening, likely on Nov. 18 or 19, Goldman economist David Mericle said in a report

The dollar has bounced since mid-September as traders price in fewer rate cuts on a more positive growth outlook for the U.S. economy. Many Federal Reserve officials are also wary of making further rate cuts on concerns about the inflation outlook.

But on Tuesday, the euro rose back above its declining trend line against the dollar that has held since September 17, Chandler noted. "The underlying sentiment toward the dollar still remains negative," he said.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of currencies including the yen and the euro, fell 0.24 per cent to 99.39, with the euro up 0.29 per cent at \$1.159.

The euro is supported by the outlook for European Central Bank policy, with its key rate expected to stay unchanged through 2027, while the Fed is seen easing policy.

In cryptocurrencies, bitcoin fell 2.28 per cent to \$103,198. (**Reuters**)

#### US shutdown relief sends stocks higher

#### By Dhara Ranasinghe and Gregor Hunter

LONDON — World stocks rallied on Wednesday as the U.S. Congress looked set to end a federal shutdown, paving the way for an end to a data fog that has fuelled uncertainty over the U.S. economic outlook.

The yen was also in the spotlight as its fall to nine-month lows against the dollar prompted more comments from officials.

European stocks rose to a new record high in early trade, U.S. stock futures, pointed to a positive open on Wall Street, while Japan's blue-chip Nikkei and broader Asia equity markets rallied around 0.4 per cent.

The Republican-controlled House of Representatives is due to vote later on Wednesday on a compromise that would restore funding to government agencies and end a shutdown that started on October 1. The Republican-controlled Senate on Monday night.



▲ People walk past a brokerage house, as an electronic board displays stock index information graph, in the Central Business District (CBD) in Beijing, China.

"There was always a risk that if the shutdown continued, further growth would be impacted and so data would be hard to read," said State Street's head of macro strategy Michael Metcalfe.

"So, the fact that we've finally got through the shutdown means there is a relief that there isn't going to be a significant shutdowndriven slowdown in growth."

U.S. jobs numbers are perhaps the most keenly anticipated data that has not been released due to the shutdown, as investors weigh up whether the U.S. Federal Reserve will cut rates again in December.

Tuesday's weekly jobs data from ADP, showed private employers shed an average of 11,250 jobs a week in the four weeks ending on October 25.

Markets price in a roughly 64 per cent probability of a 25-basis-point Fed cut in December.

"For the equity rally to extend the data needs to be soft enough to encourage the Fed to cut and not too soft to raise slowdown fears," said Metcalfe.

Japan's Topix rose over 1 per cent to hit a new record high. SoftBank Group bucked the trend with a 3.5 per cent decline, taking its month-to-date loss to around 19 per cent after it said it had sold its entire stake in Nvidia on Tuesday.

Even after the recent fall, shares in Japan's biggest tech sector investor have more than doubled this year. (**Reuters**)

#### **NATIONAL NEWS**





## Eswatini Mobile Deepens Vendor Engagement Through Ongoing Nationwide Tours

#### **By EDN Reporter**

swatini Mobile continued its 2025 nationwide vendor engagement tour with a visit to Manzini and Ngwane Park, where the company's Executive Committee met vendors to strengthen relationships and gain insight into their daily operations.

What began as a routine engagement quickly turned into a heartwarming and inspiring experience that reaffirmed the company's belief in the power of its people.

This marked the latest leg of the 2025 vendor engagement tour, which saw the executive team visiting vendors across all four regions of the country, Shiselweni, Hhohho, Lubombo, and now Manzini. The visits form part of Eswatini Mobile's ongoing commitment to strengthen relationships with its partners on the ground and to better understand the realities of the local market.

Eswatini Mobile Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Sichula, said the trade visits were a crucial part of the company's growth strategy, as they provided an opportunity for the leadership team to connect directly with the people who carry the brand forward daily.

"These visits remind us that the true strength of Eswatini Mobile does not lie only in our products and services, but in the people who represent us in every town, street, and community," said Sichula. "Our vendors are the heartbeat of our operations, and their passion, hard work, and loyalty continue to drive our success."

Reflecting on the company's broader mission, Sichula said Eswatini Mobile draws inspiration from His Majesty King Mswati III's vision for Eswatini to become a First World country.

"His Majesty's vision continues to inspire us as a company," he said. "At Eswatini Mobile, we share in that vision and work tirelessly to contribute to it by becoming Africa's Leading Integrated Business Partner and connecting our customers seamlessly across all platforms."

He explained that the engagements were not merely business check-ins but platforms for genuine connection, recognition, and appreciation.

"When we meet our vendors face-to-face, we listen, we learn, and we celebrate them. It's also our way of showing gratitude and ensuring that their voices shape how we grow as a company," said Sichula.



▲ The CEO and vendor Dumsani Nkonyane sharing a light moment.

Sichula further noted that based on the positive outcomes of these interactions, it was important for such tours to become a permanent feature of Eswatini Mobile's engagement strategy.

"These visits will not stop here. They are an essential way for us to remain connected to our vendors, and going forward, we intend to make them a regular part of how we operate," he said.

During the visit, vendors expressed their appreciation for the personal interaction with the EXCO team, describing it as both motivating and empowering. They said the company's continuous support had enabled them to build sustainable businesses and contribute to the country's digital growth.

Several vendors noted that business had been thriving and that they were motivated to push for even greater results. Their teamwork, optimism, and resilience were highlighted as clear reflections of Eswatini Mobile's values of unity, empowerment, and service to the people of Eswatini.

The visit also offered the company valuable insights into the daily experiences of its vendors, their challenges, triumphs, and creative ways of reaching customers. Sichula said these interactions played a vital role in informing the company's future strategies.

"Hearing directly from our vendors helps us understand what works and where we can do better. They are our eyes and ears in the marketplace, and their feedback ensures



that we remain a brand that truly serves the people," said the CEO.

Sichula expressed gratitude to all vendors across the four regions for their continued dedication and commitment.

"We are proud of every vendor who continues to carry the Eswatini Mobile dream with pride and purpose. Together, we are not just building a network, we are building a stronger, more connected Eswatini," added Sichula.

#### Nvidia supplier Foxconn bullish on AI demand, teases OpenAI announcement



▲ The logo of Foxconn is seen outside the company's building in Taipei, Taiwan. TAIWAN'S Foxconn, the world's largest contract electronics maker, offered a bullish outlook on AI-related demand on Wednesday saying it would be a big driver of 2026 growth, and teased an announcement next week with OpenAI.

Nvidia's biggest server maker and Apple's

top iPhone assembler has been riding a data centre boom, as cloud computing firms such

as Amazon, Microsoft

and Alphabet's tab Google spend billions of dollars to expand their AI infrastructure and research capacity.

Foxconn Chairman Young Liu told an earnings call that the importance of AI would massively increase next year, though the company would also keep a wary eye on geopolitical and currency issues.

"Generally speaking, judging from what we see now, I am very optimistic about the AI market next year," he said.

Companies announcing multi-billion-dollar investments in artificial intelligence have raised concerns about the formation of a bubble reminiscent of the dotcom boom and

But Liu said the industry was only getting

"The development of AI is still just begin-

In the third quarter, revenue of Foxconn's cloud and networking business, which includes AI servers, exceeded that of its smart consumer electronics - such as iPhones - for the second quarter in a row.

In its earnings report, Foxconn said it should see significant year-on-year revenue growth in the fourth quarter, with AI server revenue expected to increase quarter-on-quarter.

It also forecast significant annual revenue growth, in line with previous guidance given in August. It did not elaborate and the company does not provide numerical guidance for its outlook, whether full-year or quarter-

#### **OPENAI-RELATED ANNOUNCE-**MENT COMING NEXT WEEK

Foxconn, formally called Hon Hai Preci-

sion Industry, will host its annual tech day in Taipei next week.

Liu said there would be an announcement at that event related to ChatGPT creator OpenAI, though he did not provide details.

OpenAI did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Foxconn posted on Wednesday a forecast-beating 17% rise in third-quarter profit, fuelled by the sustained strength in demand

Net profit for the July-September period was T\$57.67 billion (\$1.89 billion), higher than the consensus estimate of T\$50.4 billion compiled by LSEG.

Foxconn last month reported better-than-expected third-quarter revenue on strong demand for AI products.

The company has been looking to expand its footprint in electric vehicles, which it sees as a major future growth generator, though that has not always gone smoothly.

In August, Foxconn said it had struck a deal to sell a former car factory at Lordstown, Ohio, for \$375 million, including its machinery, that it purchased in 2022 to manufacture EVs.

Foxconn's shares have surged 36% so far this year, outperforming the broader Taiwan index's 21% gain.

Its shares closed up 1.8% on Wednesday ahead of the earnings release.

(Reuters)

#### M&S shakes up fashion supply chain to spark online growth

MARKS & Spencer is revamping its supply chain from "factory to floor", the retailer's new fashion boss told Reuters, as it looks to double annual online non-food sales to nearly 3 billion pounds (\$4 billion).

John Lyttle, who joined M&S as managing director fashion, home and beauty (FH&B) in March, said the 141-year-old retailer has regained its footing after a cyberattack in April paralysed online sales and cost about 300 million pounds in lost profit.

He said M&S had done a good job re-establishing its value, quality and style credentials, with FH&B sales up 9% over three years and market share rising to 10.5% in 2024/25, from 9.1% in 2021/22.

It now needs to focus on becoming a truly omnichannel retailer, said Lyttle, in his first interview since joining M&S.

"So from where we make our goods, to how we flow that all the way into our warehouses, how our warehouses operate, and then how we feed those products out to our customers - whether that's online, whether that's in our stores," he said.

Simplifying and cutting supply chain costs has been a priority for many companies after COVID-19, war in Ukraine, Red Sea shipping disruption and broader global trade upheavals, most recently due to U.S. tariffs.

#### MORE LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS WITH SUPPLIERS

M&S, which mainly sources products from China, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Turkey, wants to create more long-term partnerships to reduce the risks to supplies.

While progress has been made in recent years through consolidating suppliers, M&S has "much more opportunity to go after through resetting how we buy, unlocking more margin from our scale, increasing cost discipline and reducing complexity," said

The cyber hack knocked what had been



▲ John Lyttle, Managing Director of Fashion, Home and Beauty at Marks & Spencer (M&S), poses for a portrait during an interview with Reuters at an M&S store in London, Britain.

a strong turnaround under Stuart Machin, margin to double digits. CEO since 2022, with M&S' 2024/25 profit its highest in over 15 years and its stock at near-decade highs.

Dominic Younger, fund manager at Columbia Threadneedle Investments, one of M&S' top 10 investors, said it had made huge and hard-won strides in fixing the FH&B

"But one of the most exciting aspects from an investment point of view is that, together with continuing to drive the food division, there is so much opportunity out there in terms of modernising the clothing supply chain," he said.

With a clothing customer base of 21 million, Lyttle said overhauling M&S' supply chain can double FH&B's online sales over the long term from about 1.4 billion pounds in 2024/25, while lifting its online operating

M&S is also aiming to increase online's share of total FH&B sales from about 34% to 50% in the medium term, said Lyttle, a former Boohoo CEO who was also an executive

"If you look at our online sales participation today versus the market, we're about 10 (percentage) points behind," said Lyttle, noting M&S was even further behind some top competitors, such as Next (Next, an early adopter of warehouse and distribution automation, makes about 59% of its UK sales online.

M&S can increase online sales by optimising the breadth and depth of its product range, encouraging more customers to use its more than 1,000 stores for 'click and collect' and returns, and utilising more channels such as lockers, Lyttle said.

It will also introduce more payment methods and relaunch its 'Sparks' loyalty programme to drive more frequent purchases.

#### INVESTMENT IN AUTOMATION

Part of M&S' plan is a 120 million pound three-year investment in automation to increase capacity, reduce complexity and deliver cost savings worth "multi-millions" of

M&S is spending 600 million to 650 million pounds on capital investment in 2025/26 of which between 200 million and 250 million is being invested in technology infrastructure, store maintenance and upgrades to its logistics fleet.

In its vast Castle Donington warehouse in central England, M&S is investing in robotic technology that will speed up sorting 'click and collect' parcels and extend cut-off times for next-day delivery to nearly midnight.

Further investment at the 900,000-square foot site and another in Bradford, northern England, will increase boxed storage capacity by more than 30%.

M&S is also accelerating the implementation of a new planning platform, with a new merchandising capability already delivered, automating what was previously largely a manual task.

Cost savings will not need to come at the expense of the 63,000-strong M&S workforce, Lyttle said, adding: "Growing our business means we're moving more product, therefore we need more people to help us do

#### **CYBER HACK LESSONS**

While the cyber hack, which forced M&S to revert to manual processes, had not changed its strategy or longer-term plans, important lessons had been learned, Lyttle

"It's not just lessons of the actual incident. It's just general things that we could have done better, or we could have done faster," he said, without giving away any specifics.

(Reuters)

THE House of Representatives will try to end the longest government shutdown in U.S. history on Wednesday, with a vote on a stopgap funding package to restart disrupted food assistance, pay hundreds of thousands of federal workers and revive a hobbled air-traffic control system.

Republicans currently hold a narrow 219-213 majority in the House.

But President Donald Trump's support for the bill is expected to keep his party together in the face of vehement opposition from House Democrats, who are angry that a long standoff launched by their Senate colleagues failed to secure a deal to extend federal health insurance subsidies.

Eight Senate Democrats on Monday broke with party leadership to pass the funding package, which would extend funding through January 30, leaving the federal government on a path to keep adding about \$1.8 trillion a year to its \$38 trillion in debt.

"My urgent plea of all my colleagues in the House -- that means every Democrat in the House -- is to think carefully, pray and finally do the right thing," Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson, who kept his chamber in recess for nearly two months as a pressure tactic in shutdown negotiations, told reporters.

House Democrats remain adamantly opposed, angered by the Senate deal that came less than a week after Democrats won high-profile elections in New Jersey, Virginia and New York City that many thought strengthened their odds of winning an extension of health insurance subsidies. While the deal sets up a December vote on those subsidies in the Senate, Johnson has made no such promise in the House.

"Donald Trump and Republicans believe the affordability crisis in America is made up. That's why these extremists haven't done a damn thing to lower the high cost of

#### US House to vote on deal to end longest government shutdown in history



The U.S. Capitol building is framed between trees with fall foliage, weeks into the continuing U.S. government shutdown, in Washington, D.C., U.S.

living. You deserve better," House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said in a social media posting on Wednesday.

If approved by the House, the funding package would have to be signed into law by Trump, who heralded Senate passage as "a very big victory" on Tuesday.

#### FROM SHUTDOWN BACK TO EP-**STEIN**

The return of the House also means that Johnson could soon face a vote to release all unclassified records related to the late con-

victed sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, something he and Trump have resisted up to now.

Johnson on Wednesday will swear in Democrat Adelita Grijalva, who won a September special election to fill the Arizona seat of her late father, Raul Grijalva. She is expected to provide the final signature needed for a petition to force a House vote on the issue.

That means that after performing its constitutionally mandated duty of keeping the government funded, the House could once again be consumed by a probe into Trump's

former friend whose life and 2019 death in prison have spawned countless conspiracy theories.

The funding package also contains three full-year appropriations bills to fund military construction, agriculture programs including food assistance for lower-income Americans and legislative branch operations.

The package would allow eight Republican senators to seek hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages for alleged privacy violations stemming from the federal investigation of the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by Trump's supporters. It retroactively makes it illegal in most cases to obtain a senator's phone data without disclosure and allows those whose records were obtained to sue the Justice Department for \$500,000 in damages, along with attorneys' fees and other costs.

"Not a cent for healthcare, but Republicans wrote in a corrupt cash bonus of at least \$500k each for 8 GOP Senators," Senator Patty Murray, top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, said in a social media posting.

The funding vote is expected late on Wednesday, and is likely to face some token Republican opposition, from Representative Thomas Massie, a Kentucky hardliner who opposed an initial House funding package in September along with fellow Representative Victoria Spartz of Indiana.

But the hardline House Freedom Caucus, often a stumbling block to spending bills, is not expected to attempt to block it, said Representative Andy Harris of Maryland, the group's chairman, who added, "I believe we're all going to be on board with this."

(Reuters)

#### Gaza patients face a painful wait as hospitals sag under burden of cases



Israeli strikes,lies on a bed at Nasser Hospital, in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip.

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD Mohammed Wael Helles has been waiting for surgery on a serious spinal injury caused by an Israeli airstrike for nearly two months, one of thousands of Gazans waiting for urgent treatment in Gaza's battered health system.

Helles was a top student with aspirations of becoming a doctor when he was wounded weeks before a ceasefire that paused two years of warfare. The attack, which killed the driver of his vehicle, tore his spinal cord and fractured three vertebrae.

"I'm still young, at the start of my life," he said from his hospital bed in Khan Younis after waking from his injury 50 days ago to find he was partially paralysed.

Israel's devastating military campaign in Gaza, triggered by the deadly Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023, has injured at least 170,000 Gazans, according to local health authorities, and pushed most Gazans into unsanitary tent camps ravaged by disease, adding to the strains on a shattered health

More than a month after Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas agreed a ceasefire, only about half of the crowded territory's 36 hospitals are even partially functional, according to the World Health Organization and they are hobbled by shortages of staff, equipment, medicine and fuel.

#### **HOSPITAL STAFF WORKING DAY AND NIGHT**

Despite the severity of Helles' injury and the fact that Nasser hospital, where he is waiting for treatment, is the biggest in southern Gaza, he may have longer to wait because it now serves a much larger population than before due to the destruction of other facilities.

Mohammed Saqer, the hospital's head of nursing and spokesperson, said staff were working day and night but could only operate on up to 100 patients a day - a fraction of those who need help.

"Even if they need urgent surgeries we have to postpone them so that we give priority to top urgent cases," Saqer said of patients on the waiting list.

"This has led to many patients losing their

#### **DOCTORS MAKE 'WORST AND** MOST DIFFICULT' DECISIONS

In northern Gaza, where more than half the population lives and where war damage is far worse, the situation is even more critical, said Mohamed Abu Selmia, head of Gaza City's al-Shifa hospital.

At al-Shifa alone, there were 40,000 delayed surgeries, Abu Selmia said, describing the decisions on whose lives to save first and whose surgeries should be delayed - as the "worst and most difficult test doctors are forced to make".

Patients whose surgery is delayed often deteriorate, he said, with leg injuries sometimes eventually requiring amputation and cancer patients finding their disease has

Eyad al-Baqari, 50, was wounded when an Israeli airstrike hit a nearby building in Gaza City and falling masonry broke his leg. He needs surgery to implant pins to fix his leg but has been waiting for three months.

He has no choice but to walk to collect food and water for his family and his injury is worsening. "The doctors told me some of the bones in my foot were damaged further,"

#### SOME IMPROVEMENT SINCE **CEASEFIRE**

There have been some improvements since the ceasefire went into effect on October 10, after which more aid started to flow into Gaza. Only 14 hospitals had been operating before the truce, compared to 18 now, more fuel and medical supplies are coming in, and the WHO has launched a vaccination programme.

While Israel says it has allowed in the daily 600 trucks of supplies required under the truce deal, the Hamas-run Gaza government says barely 150 a day have been entering.

Israel's military did not immediately respond to a request for comment on damage to hospitals and delays to the entry of needed medical equipment and medicine.

Abu Selmia said more than 60% of medicines he needs at al-Shifa were completely unavailable and there were no working MRI machines or mammography devices in Gaza.

Fuel shortages cut the amount of electricity available as well as reducing ambulance availability, he said. Staff shortages are also a problem, with 1,700 doctors and nurses killed by bombardment and another 350 in detention in Israel, he said.

"The health sector remains in a state of total collapse," Abu Selmia told Reuters. "Some patients lose their lives before they get a chance to receive treatment."

(Reuters)

## 'Methodist Medley' surpasses 2 million views

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini

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NOTHANDO Hlophe's "Methodist Medley" has reached an extraordinary milestone by surpassing 2 million views on YouTube.

"Methodist Medley" is featured on Nothando's latest album, 'A New Dawn,' which was launched at a live event on June 7, 2025, at the Mavuso Trade Centre. The album 'A New Dawn' reflects Nothando's spiritual evolution, combining heartfelt worship with contemporary gospel rhythms. Alongside "Methodist Medley," the album features other popular tracks, including "Sithumela Wena," which has also garnered significant attention with over 663,000 views on YouTube. What distinguishes "Methodist Medley" is its intimate homage to the traditional hymns that shaped Nothando's early faith in the Methodist Church. The medley artfully fuses these classic hymns with modern gospel arrangements, creating a bridge between the cherished traditions of the past and the dynamic expressions of contemporary worship. In a recent interview, Nothando opened up about the personal meaning behind the medley. She described the hymns as more than just songs; they are reflections of her identity and gateways to treasured memories from her childhood.

"These hymns carry the essence of my faith journey," she explained. "They remind me of God's faithfulness throughout my life and the comfort that comes from His

The lyrics of "Methodist Medley" focus on themes of divine protection, guidance, and the reassurance of God's presence in the midst of life's uncertainties.

The song speaks to the universal human experience of facing challenges and seeking comfort in faith. Nothando emphasised this message, saying, "We all go through



▲ Nothando Hlophe.

seasons of uncertainty, but His presence is our constant shelter. I want this song to God is with them, always."

remind people that they are never alone,

#### Lastborn HR's 'Emhlaleni Remix' promises fresh sound

LASTBORN HR is set to captivate audiences once again with the upcoming release of the 'Emhlaleni Remix.'

Scheduled for November 14, 2025, this highly anticipated remix breathes new life into his original hit single "Emhlaleni," which first captured the hearts of music lovers across Eswatini and beyond when it debuted in April of the same year. The original "Emhlaleni" quickly became a cultural phenomenon, dominating airwaves on both television and radio stations

Its infectious Afro-soul rhythms and heartfelt lyrics resonated deeply with listeners, earning it a well-deserved spot on the Eswatini Top 20 charts for several months. The song's success not only elevated Lastborn HR's profile but also showcased the rich talent emerging from the local music scene.

Building on this momentum, the remix promises to be a powerful celebration of musical collaboration and unity. Lastborn HR has brought together an impressive roster of artists to contribute their unique

styles and voices to the project. Among them are Histo, known for his innovative sound; Mvuyo Lompofu, a rising star in the Afrobeat genre; Putso De Vocalist, celebrated for his soulful delivery; and the South African sensation Jeezy Fire, whose dynamic presence adds a cross-border appeal to the remix.

#### Remix

Lastborn HR described the remix as "more than just a remix," emphasising its role as a symbol of growth and connection within the music industry. "This project represents more than just a remix, it's a celebration of unity, growth, and musical excellence," he said. "It reflects how far local music has come and highlights the strong collaborations that are building bridges between countries through music."

Fans and supporters of Lastborn HR eagerly await the release, anticipating a fresh and vibrant reinterpretation of a beloved track. "I am truly excited to share this masterpiece with my fans and supporters," Lastborn HR expressed. "I humbly ask for your continued love and support as we take local music to the next level."





#### Ace Julz's 'Tiyacokoma' pulled down

Julz's latest "Tiyacokoma," which featured popular artists MCO Jamrock and Thaifo Son, has been abruptly taken down just less than a week after its release.

The track, which was launched last Friday and quickly amassed over a thousand views on YouTube, was also scheduled for distribution across all major digital streaming platforms this week. However, fans eagerly awaiting the full release were met with disappointment as the song was removed from Ace Julz's official channels.

In an official statement, Ace Julz addressed the sudden removal of the song, revealing that "Tiyacokoma," along with all other content involving MCO Jamrock on his pages, had been taken down due to a conflict of interest involving MCO Jamrock's affiliates.

"This action transpired due to a conflict of interest with MCO Jamrock's affiliates which led to the decision to take down the song. Ace Julz will no longer be in any way involved with the artist," he confirmed. The announcement came as a surprise to many fans, who had grown to love the song's vibrant rhythms and the collaboration between the three artists. Ace Julz expressed regret over the situation, urging fans to remain calm and refrain from engaging in any negative behaviour towards MCO Jamrock and his

"We urge all our fans to remain calm and not be or engage in any negative behaviour towards MCO Jamrock and his team," he stated. Additionally, Ace Julz extended sincere apologies to Thaifo Son's fans and his own supporters, acknowledging the disappointment caused by the song's removal.

"Sincere apologies to Thaifo Son's fans as well as mine, we understand you had anticipated the release of the song but due to a conflict of interest the song had to go," he added. The creative industry is no stranger to disagreements and conflicts, and Ace Julz emphasised his commitment to maintaining a positive and inspiring artistic environment. "Within the creative industry, we get to have disagreements and conflicts, however my goal is to create positive and uplifting content that inspires and shares our stories, and I will continue to do so," he concluded.

## Campus Connect Eswatini 2025 to empower students

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

CAMPUS Connect Eswatini 2025 is set to be a landmark event bringing together over a thousand university students, young professionals, and community members for a night of music, networking, and social impact.

The much-anticipated Campus Connect Eswatini 2025 event is scheduled for Friday, 5 December 2025, at the De Lounge Bar and Restaurant. This event is not just a celebration of music and networking but also a powerful initiative aimed at supporting disadvantaged high school and self-sponsored university students across

Event organiser K Master, a respected figure in the local entertainment scene, shared insights into the motivation behind Campus Connect ESwatini. "Our primary goal with this event is to raise funds to provide essential toiletries for needy students who often face challenges accessing basic hygiene products," he explained. K Master emphasised that the event is designed to foster a spirit of community and social responsibility among young people while offering an engaging platform for entertainment and connection.

The event boasts an impressive lineup of local talent, including popular artists such as Young Zesh, Obsession, Lord F, and Bayanda MC, among others. Their performances are expected to energise the crowd and create an unforgettable atmosphere. "Bringing together these artists is part of our vision to showcase the richness of Eswatini's music scene while supporting a meaningful cause," K Master noted. Tickets for Campus Connect Eswatini are available at various price points to accommodate a wide audience. Pre-sale tickets are priced at E100, VIP tickets at E450, and tickets at the gate will cost E150. K Master highlighted the importance of accessibility, stating, "We want as many people as possible to join us, so we've structured ticket prices to be affordable while also offering VIP experiences for those who want to support the event at a higher level."

While sponsorships for the event are still being finalised, K Master remains optimistic



▲ Campus Connect Eswatini director K Master.

about securing partners who share the event's vision. "We are actively engaging with potential sponsors who understand the impact this event can have on our youth and community," he said. The proceeds from Campus Connect will directly fund the purchase of toiletries and other essential items, addressing critical needs that affect students' education and well-being.

The program promises a dynamic blend of entertainment, networking opportunities, music, stalls, and community outreach activities. K Master described the event as more than just a party, "Campus Connect is about creating a space where young people can connect, be inspired, and contribute to social change. The community outreach and social impact initiatives are at the heart of what we do."

K Master's extensive experience in the entertainment industry lends credibility and excitement to the event. Having served as Minister of Sports, Culture, and Entertainment at Eswatini Medical Christian University from 2023 to 2024, he has a proven track record of organising successful events. He also hosted the memorable closing and opening bashes that brought Thatohatsi at Mdzimba to the public for the first time in 2024. His role as a resident DJ at popular venues such as Lawu LeNgwenya, Drift, and El Sotano, along with collaborations with prominent local event organisers like Baba, Lungsta da Deeper, and SleeQ, underscores his deep roots in the local cultural scene.

▲ Eswatini's Jojo.

#### Jojo, Livin SZ shine on 'Vintage Afro'

SOUTH African music producer Mobi Dixon has once again demonstrated his flair for collaboration and innovation by featuring Eswatini artists Jojo and Livin SZ on his latest extended play (EP), titled 'Vintage Afro.'

Released on November 7, 2025, the fivetrack EP showcases a blend of Afrobeat rhythms and soulful melodies, with the standout track "More Love" featuring the Eswatini creatives. The collaboration behind "More Love" is a testament to the interconnectedness of Southern African music talents. Jojo, a rising star from Eswatini, revealed in an exclusive interview how the partnership came about.

She explained that her initial contact with Mobi Dixon was indirect, facilitated by Livin SZ, a Swati producer based in South Africa. Livin SZ had sent Jojo several beats, inviting her to record vocals. "I picked the 'More Love' beat, recorded my vocals, and sent them back," Jojo recounted. "At first, I thought it was just another song, but Livin SZ was really impressed. He called it a masterpiece."

#### Attention

The track caught the attention of Mobi Dixon, who then took the project further. "I got a call saying Mobi Dixon loved the song too. He worked on it, made a few changes here and there, and completed it. He told me it would be part of his upcoming project, though no release dates were initially given," Jojo said. Over time, Jojo continued to perform "More Love" live, and the song consistently received positive responses from audiences, underscoring its potential long before the official release.

Mobi Dixon, born Mabi Ntuli, is a wellestablished figure in the South African music scene. His debut studio album, 'Tribal Soul' (2014), achieved platinum status certified by the Recording Industry of South Africa (RiSA), cementing his reputation as a leading DJ and producer. Known for his ability to blend house music with Afrocentric sounds, Dixon has consistently pushed the boundaries of South African electronic music.

#### SibaneSami Hotel gears up for Christmas Lunch with Sands

SIBANESAMI Hotel is preparing to spread festive cheer this December as it hosts its much-anticipated Christmas Lunch with Sands.

The event is scheduled for December 25 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The event promises to blend the warmth of the holiday season with fine dining, entertainment, and family-centred fun in an elegant setting. Positioned as one of the premier festive events of the year, the Christmas Lunch is designed to bring together families, friends, and guests from all walks of life to celebrate the spirit of togetherness.

The SibaneSami Hotel team has created a special experience that combines exquisite cuisine with a vibrant atmosphere reflective of the joy and generosity of Christmas Day. The event will feature Sands, who is set to enhance the afternoon with soulful entertainment that complements the mood of the season.

Guests can expect a festive buffet filled with a variety of delicacies and holiday

favourites. Every element of the lunch, from the décor to the menu presentation, is being meticulously planned to ensure a blend of sophistication and warmth. The hotel has emphasised that the goal is to provide an environment where guests can relax, laugh, and share meaningful moments as they close off the year.

Pricing for the event has been tailored to accommodate families, with adults paying E605 per person, children aged 6 to 11 years paying E325, and children aged 3 to 5 years paying E150. Located in Ezulwini, SibaneSami Hotel has established itself as one of Eswatini's top hospitality destinations, offering world-class service and scenic surroundings.

Attendees are encouraged to make reservations early to secure their seats for what promises to be a delightful afternoon. With limited seating available, demand is expected to be high as both residents and visitors seek memorable ways to celebrate Christmas Dav.



▲ Sands.

## Shebeshxt arrested for attempted murder

POLICE in Limpopo have arrested a the suspect's vehicles for forensic analysis well-known musician during an intelligence-driven operation on Wednesday morning in the upscale suburb of Bendor, outside of Polokwane.

According to police spokesperson Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, the name of the musician has not been disclosed, but he is believed to be Lehlogonolo Chauke, popularly known as Shebeshxt.

The arrest was made during a joint operation between the provincial investigation unit and the provincial tracking team, following a warrant issued in connection with two counts of attempted murder registered at Westernburg SAPS (South African Police Service). Arrest warrant

"The arrest is related to an incident that happened early on Sunday, October 19, 2025, along Witklip Street in Ladanna, outside of Polokwane.

"It is alleged that the suspect got into a fight with another driver and fired multiple shots at another vehicle, injuring a 34-yearold man who was taken to the hospital with serious injuries," Ledwaba said. The case was first opened at Westernburg SAPS before being moved to the provincial investigation unit for additional investigation, Ledwaba continued.

After detectives secured an arrest warrant on Tuesday, Shebeshxt was apprehended the following day.

"During the operation, police also seized

as part of ongoing investigations," added Ledwaba.

Limpopo provincial commissioner of police, Lt-Gen Thembi Hadebe, commended the investigation and operational teams for their swift and coordinated response.

"We are addressing this matter with utmost seriousness, and we have appointed a dedicated team to thoroughly investigate every aspect," Hadebe stated. "The South African Police Service reiterates that no one is above the law, regardless of their social standing."

Court appearance on Thursday

Shebeshxt is expected to appear before the Polokwane Magistrate's Court on Thursday on charges of attempted murder.

On October 26, Sunday World first reported the story after learning that Shebeshxt's lawyers had turned him over to the police.

However, shortly after his detention in police holding cells, a group of detectives from the provincial police headquarters arrived and freed the artist.

"They took the docket from the Westenburg police station and said the matter is being investigated by the murder and robbery unit, and that they would obtain a statement from the musician and the victim once investigations have been completed," the Sunday World informant said at the time. (Sunday World)



▲ Rapper Shebeshxit was arrested on Wednesday morning.

#### Thandiswa Mazwai celebrates her 50th birthday

FANS of South African music are set for a major celebration as Thandiswa Mazwai launches the Sankofa Heritage Festival, marking her 50th birthday and 30 years in the industry.

The event will take place on Saturday, February 28, 2026, at Carnival City in Johannesburg.

The festival is supported by the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture through its Mzansi Golden Economy

Mazwai, a multi-award-winning artist whose career has shaped the sound of post-apartheid South Africa, will headline the evening.

Known for her genre-blending style, she rose to fame with Bongo Maffin before pursuing a successful solo career that continues to influence African mu-

Her latest album, "Sankofa", is nominated for five South African Music Awards (Samas). The name Sankofa, drawn from the Ghanaian Twi word meaning "to go back and fetch what has been left behind," reflects Mazwai's ongoing exploration of identity and herit-

She will share the stage with a line-up of artists representing different African sounds and generations, to be announced soon. (IOL)

#### 'Mr Bean' returns in 'Man Vs Baby'

THE recent trailer release for Rowan 'Mr Bean' Atkinson's new short series on Netflix has generated immense excitement among his fans. Many anticipate that the show will positively reawaken their childhood memories with laughter.

Atkinson, beloved by fans for his iconic "Mr. Bean" character, returned to Netflix in 2022 with the successful short series, "Man vs. Bee". This series, which is a mustwatch for fans who missed his recent work, features nine episodes, each approximately ten to twelve minutes long, with the first chapter being 19

"Man vs Baby" is a short series of four episodes, each 30 minutes long, totaling approximately 2 hours. Slightly different from the last series, which is approximately 1 hour and 48 minutes in total, of all episodes combined. Atkinson is now reuniting with Netflix for another comedy series titled "Man vs. Baby" as Trevor Bingley.

He was spotted early this year in February, and was suspected of shooting another "Man vs Bee" series, and his true fans were already informed that he's shooting another series.

A fan named David, on TikTok, commented, "I've just checked his upcoming projects and he is doing another Mr. Bean. He has 3 projects upcoming. Johnny English 4, man vs baby, and an untitled Mr. Bean project." The newly released trailer



introduces the central plot through a series of key dialogues. It opens with an officer asking Trevor, "Sorry to bother you, sir. We're making inquiries about a missing baby." Later, Bingley calls his family, dismissing their inquiries for details by simply saying, "It's a long story." It was almost the same thing in "Man vs Bee". The tension escalates when Bingley calls the police, reporting, "I rang earlier about a baby that was left behind, at St Aldwyn's school." However, the call quickly cuts off after a brief, confusing exchange where the police officer asks if his last name is "Mr Bin," an assumption Bingley instantly denies, and the chaos starts from there.

(Bang Showbiz)

#### Paris Jackson reveals nose damage from past drug use

MICHAEL Jackson's daughter, Paris Jackson has shared a frank admission about the repercussions of her past substance abuse, exposing a physical condition never seen before.

In a TikTok video posted on November 10, she revealed she is living with a perforated septum, which is essentially, a hole in the cartilage or bone dividing the nostrils - a condition she attributes to years of drug use.

She explained to her followers: "I have a really loud whistle when I breathe through my nose... and that is because I have what is called a perforated sep-

Then, holding a mobile phone's torch to highlight the cavity in her nose, she added: "That is ... what you think it's from." But her message went deeper than the physical dam-

age. Paris addressed the wider implications of addiction with honest clarity: "Don't do drugs, kids... I'm not going to tell anyone what to do. But I don't recommend it because it ruined my

Despite being almost six years sober from alcohol and heroin, Paris has chosen not to undergo corrective surgery for her septum. Her reasoning is rooted in her recovery journey: she fears the necessary post-operative medication could threaten her sobriety.

"You have to take pills when you do a surgery that gnarly and I'm just ... I don't wanna f-k with that," she said.

Having lived with the hole "since I was about 20", Paris admitted the condition doesn't only affect her breathing but also has consequences in her studio work: "It's a b--- when you're in the studio." (Bang Showbiz)





▲ Michael Jackson's daughter, Paris Jackson has shared a frank admission about the repercussions of her past substance abuse, exposing a physical condition never seen before.

#### Healthy Diet Changes for Fatty Liver Disease

A healthy diet can help prevent your fatty liver disease from getting worse or even stop it entirely.

When you eat the right foods, you lose weight --- that lowers the amount of fat in your liver.

Start small. You don't have to make huge changes in your diet.

Even small changes can have a big impact on your liver health.

#### Grab and Go Healthy Snack Tips

If you have MASH or MASLD, keep healthy snacks handy for when you're on the go.

Snack healthy and try:

- ▶ Whole-grain tortilla chips paired with guacamole to add fiber.
- ▶ Plantain chips, which are rich in fiber, potassium, magnesium, and vitamins A and C. For lower fat, look for baked.
- ▶ Spicy peanuts and pepitas (pumpkin seeds) provide heart-healthy fat, protein, and fiber.
- ► Fruit topped with lime juice and chili seasoning.

#### **Start New Family Traditoins**

To keep meal times fun with the family, aim to have a couple of healthy themed meals each week.

Themed meal nights, you can try:

- ► Meatless Monday: Serve vegetable quesadillas stuffed with chopped vegetables, black beans, and low-fat cheddar cheese.
- ▶ Taco Thursday: Serve fish tacos made from your favorite white fish, seasoning, shredded cabbage, low-fat cheese, and lowcarb, whole-grain tortillas.

#### **Cut Out and Swap Out Sugar**

Here are some easy ways to lower sugar in your diet.

Lower sugar, you can try to:

- ▶ Ditch sugary drinks like soda to help you get rid of 39 grams of sugar --- the total sugar in a 12-ounce can of cola.
- Swap soda and juice for plain or sparkling water as much as possible.

▶ Add slices of lemon, lime, or orange to

- flavor your water.

  ▶ Only eat sweets like ice cream once or
- twice a week, or not at all.
- ▶ Offer fruit topped with Greek yogurt as dessert.

#### Exercise as a Family

Staying active with fatty liver disease helps prevent your condition from getting worse. But staying active benefits the whole family, and it's more fun!

Stay active, try to get at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Set aside a little time each day for the family to get active together. Even if you don't enjoy it at first, physical activity is often more fun when you do it as a family.

#### Take Family Walks

You don't have to run a marathon or exercise at the gym to improve your MASLD and MASH. Studies show walking for 30 minutes most days of the week can help improve liver function.

Walk more, you can squeeze in a walk with your family if you:



# Tips to inspire your family to healthier habits



- ► Walk your dog
- ▶ Walk your kids to and from school
- ► Take a walk before or after dinner
- ➤ You can make it more fun for your kids if you play music or games like "I Spy" or even have a short scavenger hunt.

#### Play Backyard Soccer

Rather than sit inside, schedule 30 minutes of family time outdoors.

Play soccer, kids love it? You can just all kick the ball around, or even focus on drills, dribbling, passing, or shooting. As long as you all get your heart rate up, it's all good. You can also add some strength training moves so that everyone gets stronger soccer muscles. You can try:

▶ Push-ups

- ▶ Planks
- ► Squat jumps

#### Coach Your Kid's Sports Team

It's a win-win for both you and your child. You'll get to spend time together, and you'll get to see them grow in a sport that they love to do.

Be a sports team coach, its a great way for both you and your child to stay active. You'll be able to exercise with your child outdoors when you do sports drills.

#### How to Get Your Family on Board

The family that eats healthfully together and exercises together stays well together. But it can be tough to get everyone on board.

Get the whole family involved, try to stay positive about new healthy habits. Here are some ways you can make healthy habits motivating and fun.

#### How to Make Healthy Habits Fun

Kids get excited about family activities, especially when they're part of the process. Let your kids decide, and try to:

- ► Take your kids to the grocery store.
- ► Have them pick out fruits and vegetables.
  - ► Let them help you cook.

Help your kids create fruit smiley faces, wash veggies, and mix batter. To encourage physical activity, let them pick what they want to do, whether it's a dance party or to

## HEALTH / levs

play tag.

#### How to Make a Habit Stack Together

It can be tough when you're trying to start a new healthy habit. To help, create a habit stack — build a habit onto activities you already do.

Habit stack, and make habits together, you can try to:

- ▶ Add in going for a short walk, right after your normal breakfast time
- ▶ Start stretching right after you brush your teeth
- ▶ Lift weights while you watch TV
- ▶ Research shows that even these small bouts of activity can help to make you healthier.

#### **Reward Positive Behavior**

When your kids do something positive on their own, reward them. If they choose a piece of fruit as a snack or do physical activity outside, give them some praise.

Reward your kids, you can give a nonfood rewards, like:

- ► A hug
- ▶ Going to a neighborhood block party
- ▶ Playing a card game such as Loteria
- ▶ When you see and reward your child's efforts, they are more likely to continue.

#### Be a Role Model for Healthy Habits

When it comes to healthy living, lead by

Be the family role model, you can try and:

- ► Show your family how you've made eating pattern changes.
- ▶ Let them know how many fruits and veggies you eat each day.

Share the little ways you've built in more activity.

- ▶ Track your wins where they can see.
- Share that you've lost weight, your blood pressure is down, or liver health is
- ▶ If they see you do well, it will inspire them to join.

#### How to Change One Thing at a Time

The best way to adopt healthy habits is to start with one small thing at a time.

Change one thing, to start small, here are a few things to try:

- ▶ Don't exercise? Begin with a short 5-10 minute walk most days of the week. Add more time once you've built up your
- ► Changing your diet? Start with an easy goal like cutting out one sugary drink a week, then every other day, until finally it's once a day.

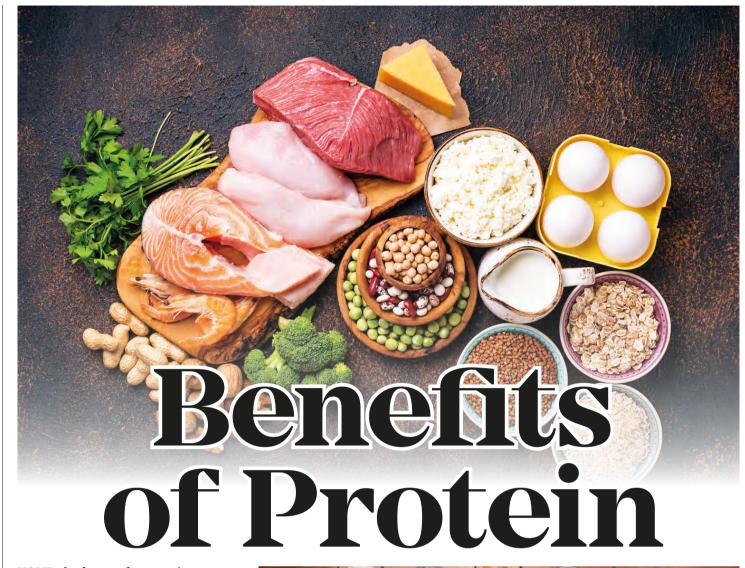
#### How to Stay Positive

Happiness spreads. You can help your family stay positive about healthy habits.

Teach positivity, to teach healthy habits,

- ▶ Say "Let's take a walk after dinner, it will let us spend time together."
- ▶ Ask open-ended questions like "Why do you think this food is good for you?"
- ▶ Practice gratitude, talk about daily positive experiences.
- ► Supporting each other can help you eat more healthy foods, stay active, and improve your liver health.

**WebMD** 



YOUR body needs protein to stay healthy and work the way it should.

More than 10,000 types are found in everything from your organs to your muscles and tissues to your bones, skin, and

Protein is also a critical part of the processes that fuel your energy and carry oxygen throughout your body in your blood. It also helps make antibodies that fight off infections and illnesses and helps keep cells healthy and create new ones. Plus, protein helps you feel full, so it's often part of a healthy weight-loss plan.

#### **How Much Protein Do You Need?**

Not getting enough protein in your diet can lead to health issues. For example, tissue can break down and lead to muscle loss. But more isn't necessarily better. While it can help build muscle, if you take in too much your body may store the excess as fat.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, put together by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, recommend daily amounts of protein for different age groups (Girls and women generally need an ounce less per day than males):

- ► Children under 4: 2-4 ounce equivalents Children ages 4 to 8:
- equivalents Boys ages 9 to 13:  $5-6\frac{1}{2}$  ounce equivalents
- Boys ages 14 to 18:  $5\frac{1}{2}$ -7 ounce equivalents
- Men ages 19 to 30:  $6\frac{1}{2}$ -7 ounce equivalents

One-ounce equivalents of protein foods

- ▶ 1 ounce cooked meat, poultry or fish
- ▶ ¼ cup cooked beans or lentils
- 1 tablespoon peanut, almond or sunflower butter, or tahini



- ▶ ½ ounce nuts or seeds
- ▶ ¼ cup or 2 ounces tofu
- ▶ 1 ounce cooked tempeh

Simply put, most everyone should get 10% to 35% of their calories each day in the form of protein. You need more calories for activities like biking, lifting weights, or running, but the percentage of protein remains in the same range. After age 40, you can start to lose muscle mass, a condition known as sarcopenia, and you may need more protein. If you're overweight, you'll need to lower your calorie intake. A dietitian can help you figure out how much protein you should have.

#### What Are the Best Sources of **Protein?**

Why Am I Dizzy?High-quality sources of protein include:

- ► Fish
- ▶ Poultry
- ► Lean beef or pork (in limited amounts)
- ► Eggs
- ▶ Dairy products

But you can get all the protein you need from plant-based sources. These include:

- ► Nuts
- ► Seeds
- ▶ Legumes, like beans, peas, or lentils
- ► Grains, like wheat, rice, or corn

You can combine large amounts of these with smaller portions of animal-based sources, like dairy products or eggs to make sure you're getting enough amino acids.

Limit the amount of protein you get from processed meats -- like bacon, sausage, or cold cuts.

#### **How Do High-Protein Diets** Affect You?

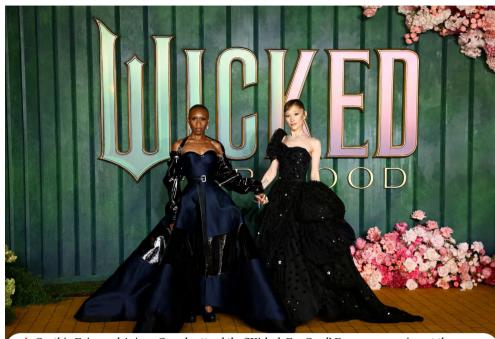
Some weight-loss programs, like the Atkins Diet and the Ketogenic Diet, call for high amounts of protein and fat while limiting carbs. But research shows that they seem to primarily work well only in the short-term. One reason may be that people aren't able to stick with this type of eating plan over a long period of time.

Be mindful of what diets you try. Focusing just on protein and fat can keep you from getting all the nutrients you need, and that can lead to unhealthy side effects. That can lead to fatigue, dizziness, headaches, bad breath and constipation. WebMD

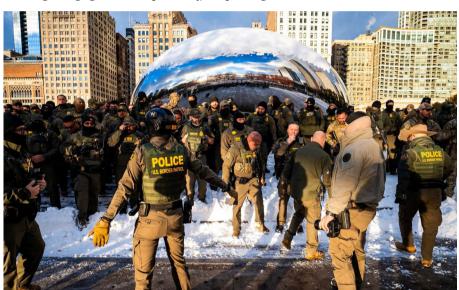
### Around the world in pictures



▲ Former U.S. Marine Robert Gilman, who is serving a prison sentence for assaulting a Russian police officer in 2022, reacts inside a defendants' cage during a court hearing considering new charges alleging he attacked prison staff this past August, in Voronezh, Russia.



▲ Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande attend the 'Wicked: For Good' European premiere at the Cineworld Leicester Square in London, Britain.



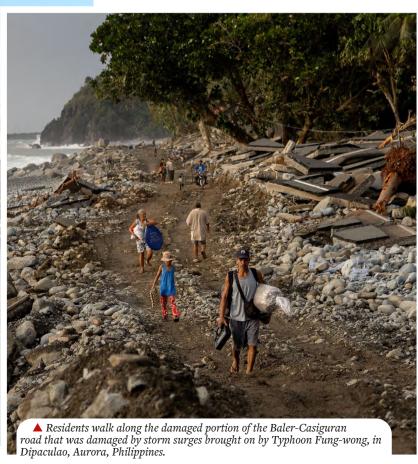
▲ Members of the U.S. Border Patrol pose for photographs at Millennium Park near the sculpture Cloud Gate, also known as The Bean, after snow fell overnight in Chicago, Illinois.



A Ray Nahrgang hugs his friend and Vietnam veteran Harry Metzler as Harry touches the names of friends he lost during the Vietnam war, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Veterans Day in Washington.



▲ Red Flanders poppies are projected onto Sydney Opera House on Remembrance Day in Sydney, Australia.



## Tuchel warns Bellingham must fight for England berth at World Cup

THOMAS Tuchel has warned Jude Bellingham that the Real Madrid midfielder faces a fight to earn a place in England's starting line-up at the World Cup.

Bellingham is back in Tuchel's squad for their final World Cup qualifiers against Serbia and Albania this week after being left out of the last international gathering in October.

The 22-year-old had just returned from shoulder surgery when Tuchel opted against selecting him for the Wales and Latvia matches last month, allowing Aston Villa's Morgan Rogers to shine in the number 10 role for England.

Rogers' impressive performances have presented Tuchel with an intriguing dilemma as he looks ahead to next year's World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mex-

"Rather than finding a position for the best players to have them on the field, it is maybe better to put everyone in their best position and have a competition," Tuchel told reporters on Wednesday when asked if he would try to fit both players into his team.

"At the moment the competition is between the two of them. They are friends, so it is a friendly competition.

"They don't have to be enemies and hate each other. They are respectful and they fight for the same position.

"Can they play together? Yes, but in a different structure and now is not the moment to change the structure."

Bellingham's return comes after Tuchel was forced to apologise earlier this season for claiming his mother found some of the playmaker's on-pitch antics "repulsive".

#### 'THE STANDARDS ARE CLEAR'

Tuchel, who also recalled Phil Foden after he was left out of the previous three England squads, insisted Bellingham and the Manchester City forward both seem happy to be back in the fold.

But he made it clear that England's strong performances without Bellingham and Foden showed they are not guaranteed to waltz back into his side.

"It has been good to have him (Bellingham) back. There has been a good atmosphere in the last two days and everyone is happy to be in camp," Tuchel said.

"It is always nice to have Phil around, he is a nice guy and like Jude, he is part of this squad and happy to be together.

"I expect what they show. Be straightaway part of the group, and why should it be awkward for them? We were driving the levels and standards without them.

"We are obliged to drive our own standards and build what we can build. Now they are back and it is their responsibility to contribute to this and it is what they are doing. The standards are clear."

Group K winners England secured their World Cup berth with a 5-0 rout of Latvia



▲ Thomas Tuchel.

Tuchel has won seven of his eight matches, including six World Cup qualifiers without conceding a single goal.

After hosting Serbia on Thursday and travelling to Albania on Sunday, Tuchel has only two friendlies remaining in March before he has to name his World Cup squad.

Regardless of who makes it into his group for the tournament, the former Chelsea and Bayern Munich boss is pleased with the unity he has managed to create in less than a year in charge.

"What we are trying is to build a strong

bond, to build an energy, a team, a brotherhood that everybody wants to join and to also build a competition that everybody knows that if they pull out in the wrong moment, the door can be closed because someone else will take their place," he said.

"It is not as a threat but the other way around. We are absolutely on the way. Everybody wanted to be part of the camp. Everybody was desperate to come.

"It is an energy that feeds itself and this at the moment is the place where we are."



▲ Barcelona all-time great Lionel Messi.

#### Messi return 'unrealistic'

BARCELONA all-time great Lionel Messi returning to the Catalan giants is "unrealistic", the club's president Joan Laporta said on Wednesday.

The 38-year-old Argentine superstar made a surprise appearance at Barca's Camp Nou stadium on Sunday night and said he hoped "one day I can return, and not just to say goodbye as a player, as I never got to do".

Eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi, Barca's record goalscorer and appearance maker, left for Paris Saint-Germain in 2021 after two decades there because their precarious financial position meant they could not afford to keep him.

"Out of the utmost respect for Messi, the professionals at the club, Barca, and the Barca club members, I believe that now, for me to make speculation that is unrealistic, nor do I think it's fair, well, I believe that is not appropriate," Laporta told Catalunya Radio.

The president, who was in charge at the time of Messi's departure, said he did not regret what happened because "Barca is above everything".

Laporta confirmed he would love to hold a match in homage to Messi's career at the rebuilt Camp Nou, once it is fully open.

(Supersport)

#### Red Bull F1 teams to hold 2026 launch in Detroit in January

RED Bull's two Formula One teams will hold a joint launch in Detroit next January to mark the start of a new engine partnership with Ford, they said on Tuesday.

The Red Bull Racing and Racing Bulls event will be on January 15, with Formula One's first test of 2026 scheduled behind closed doors at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya on January 26-30.

The current season still has three rounds to run, ending on December 7 in Abu Dhabi, and Red Bull, winners of the last four drivers' championships with Max Verstappen, are the first to set a launch date.

Red Bull Ford powertrains will debut as a power unit manufacturer next season, the first of the sport's new engine era.

Both teams are currently powered by

Honda units but the Japanese manufacturer will be exclusively partnering Aston Martin from 2026.

Red Bull team boss Laurent Mekies said the launch marked "a bold step into the future" and a culmination of years of collaboration between Red Bull and Ford.

"Since we announced our return to F1 with Red Bull, the Ford team have been working night and day to get ready for 2026. But this is about so much more than just the racing," said Ford CEO Jim Farley in a statement.

"It is about how we use our learnings from F1 to make our cars and trucks better for our customers. What we will learn together with Red Bull will define the technologies of the future and that is what excites me most about this relationship."

(Supersport)



## Wolves appoint Edwards as manager in bid to avoid relegation

PREMIER League strugglers Wolves confirmed the appointment of Rob Edwards as their new head coach on a three-and-a-half year contract on Wednesday.

Edwards has left Championship club Middlesbrough and replaces Vitor Pereira, who was sacked by Wolves earlier this month.

The 42-year-old, who managed Luton in the Premier League, faces a huge task to extend Wolves' eightyear stay in the top flight.

Wolves have taken just two points from their opening 11 league games, losing nine times to sink to the bottom of the table.

Edwards will be in his fourth spell at Wolves after making 111 appearances as a player, as well as enjoying time at the Midlands club as a coach and interim boss.

"I know Rob very well and I have seen his growth in different jobs," said Wolves chairman Jeff Shi.

"He's a very good person, he knows the club very well, he knows the city, the fans and he is very talented.

"When he was a youth coach here, he showed his tactical awareness, but after he took first-team jobs he started to grow his own identity, character and leadership."

Edwards lifted Middlesbrough to second place in the Championship table, five points behind leaders Coventry, prior to his departure.

Wolves are already eight points from safety and Shi added: "We need



▲ Rob Edwards.

to refresh the whole club with a new coach's philosophy, bringing his own identity and ideas, and we can build on that.

"We are at a new chapter for the club and Rob will be a key piece of that."

Middlesbrough had initially rejected an approach for Edwards, who only joined the club in June.

Edwards, however, expressed his desire for a move to Molineux and was stood down for Middlesbrough's Championship win against Birmingham on Saturday after the clubs agreed a reported £3 million compensation package.

He will be joined by assistant head coach Harry Watling after the pair worked together at Middlesbrough Edwards' first game in charge of Wolves will come after the international break on November 22, at home to Crystal Palace.

He arrives at Molineux tasking with lifting a gloomy atmosphere after frustrated fans turned on Pereira and called for owners Fosun to sell the club.

Pereira had saved Wolves from relegation last season but the Portuguese coach was unable to recreate that magic this term.

Confidence has been at rock bottom for much of the season, with successive 3-0 defeats at Fulham and Chelsea in their last two matches providing the impetus for Shi to take the managerial change.

(Supersport)

#### Musetti battles 'until the end' to remain at ATP Finals

ITALIAN Lorenzo Musetti was the last man to arrive for the ATP Finals and came close to being the first man to exit, but, backed by the Turin crowd, he made a remarkable comeback from the brink to defeat Alex de Minaur 7-5 3-6 7-5 on Tuesday.

After celebrating with his team, the victor wrote a message on the television camera, "fino alla fine" - Italian for "until the end" - a slogan used by Juventus, the football club Musetti supports, and one that perfectly matches this performance.

Musetti missed out on ATP Finals qualification when he lost to Novak Djokovic in Athens on Saturday, but was drafted in to make his debut when the Serbian withdrew.

He had little time to recover before Monday's 6-3 6-4 loss to last year's finalist Taylor Fritz, and was back in action again on Tuesday, knowing defeat would bring elimination.

Musetti took the first set without conceding a break point and had De Minaur on the rails in the second set opener only for the Australian to survive and go on to force a decider.

The Italian's loss to Djokovic took almost three hours, and was the third three-setter Musetti had played last week in Athens. A third set against De Minaur seemed one too many when the Australian took a 2-0 lead.

#### 'I'M A WARRIOR'

"I was really struggling physically because Alex raised the level and intensity and I was really struggling to find the solution," Musetti said.

The Italian crowd roared on encouragement at every point won by Musetti, and even some that were lost, like when De Minaur hung on to win a 31-shot rally, holding serve to go 5-3 up.

Musetti pulled out a cheeky through-the-legs shot, but De Minaur, falling backwards, somehow won the point and both players collapsed to the floor.

It looked like Musetti had lost his chance, but he went on to win the next four games and claim the match, beating his chest after winning dramatic points and rallying the crowd who needed little encouragement.

"I'm a warrior," Musetti said.
"I have improved a lot on the mental side and I am pushing myself to the limit because I am playing every match against the top players.

"At the end with a big heart and big passion for this game, I don't know from where, I started to feel better and play better and the support of the crowd is amazing."

It does not get any easier for Musetti, with the Italian facing world No 1 Carlos Alcaraz on Thursday, where again a win is needed to survive against a player who has won both his matches.

One thing is for certain, nobody will be leaving the Inalpi Arena early, now that Musetti has shown what "until the end" really means.

(Supersport)

▲ Italian Lorenzo Musetti.

## Mbappe says France football team 'to remember' Paris terror victims

FRANCE captain Kylian Mbappe said the national football team wished to remember all the victims of the 2015 Paris terror attacks as they prepare to play on the 10th anniversary of the atrocity.

On Friday, November 13, 2015, a series of attacks in Paris and around the Stade de France during a friendly match between Les Bleus and Germany left a total of 130 people dead.

"Everyone knows how special tomorrow is," Mbappe said on the eve of France's World Cup qualifier against Ukraine.

"Not in a good way. So we wanted to remember all those who have lost loved ones, who have been affected, hurt, whether mentally or physically.

"We will try tomorrow to pay tribute to all these people, whether during the day, during the match, by trying to put smiles on the faces of those who come to the stadium, even though we know it's not a joyful day."

Most of those who were killed lost their lives at the Bataclan concert hall in the city, where the US band



▲ France captain Kylian Mbappe.
Eagles of Death Metal was playing.

But one person died near the Stade de France in the northern Paris suburb of Saint-Denis, where multiple explosions took place as suicide bombers attempted to enter the ground.

The stadium was packed with France's then-president, Francois Hollande, among the close to 80 000 spectators in attendance for the game against Germany – the match was played to a conclusion despite the unfolding events, with France winning 2-0.

"It would have been better if we could have avoided playing on November 13," coach Didier Deschamps, who was on the touchline 10 years ago, admitted as he spoke to reporters last week to announce his squad.

A minute's silence will be held ahead of kick-off to remember the victims of the attacks, and Deschamps added: "There is an obligation to remember what happened, but there is a football match to be played too."

(Supersport)

## G. Mamba, Stingers vying for summit

## ... As Wanderers seek first win at unpredictable Ubombo Sugar FC

#### **By Chris Dlamini**

WILL leaders Rangers be toppled on Thursday? At least two teams in the Thursday fixtures stand to dislodge 'Bolova' from the summit.

However, only a draw or win for Green Mamba and a win only for Ezulwini United sees Bolova (Rangers) momentarily drop from the top spot.

Interesting enough is that the two go head-to-head. Whoever wins, takes the top spot, but a draw will also be enough for Green Mamba ahead of Friday's fixtures.

#### It's either sweet or sour for Wanderers

Ubombo Sugar FC vs. Manzini Wanderers Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 Venue: Mayaluka Stadium, Big Bend Kick-off: 3.30pm

The time to start winning is now for hub giants Manzini Wanderers. Five games and zero wins is not what their supporters expected and already, they have changed coaches once after their third match, bringing in Gcina Dlamini from Ubombo Sugar FC, interestingly. He is vying for his third game and finds himself also under pressure, especially after the damning 4-0 defeat at the hands of Manzini Sea Birds last weekend.

Dlamini has only added a point to Wanderers tally after the 2-all draw with Mbabane Highlanders, they now have two points at the bottom part of the standings. Surely, this is a very tough outing against a stubborn Ubombo Sugar FC.

The sugar belt outfit has not had it any easier either but they know panic is not the solution as yet - its only matchweek 6 and they host a struggling rival at Mayaluka Stadium, their own backyard where they will hope to get the maximum three points after having managed just one win and a draw out of five matches - quite struggling too.

That Wanderers is coming to their home entangled by infighting and an on-field winless streak, will be a motivation for Bafana Bashukela as Ubombo is fondly known. Both sides need to start showing they are not here just to add numbers and fight relegation all season. Ubombo is on 14th with just four points, two better than LiWeseli (Wanderers), who sit below them on position 15 after five matches.

Ubombo Sugar will want to make this reunion with coach Dlamini a bitter one of course by simply inflicting defeat to his new team - they have every reason to believe they can win this game and get a breather themselves after a disappointing two weeks.

Dlamini is leading his very wounded troops to Mayaluka, hoping they can put the 4-0 humbling defeat to city rivals Sea Birds behind them. So, Bafana Shukela know what to expect from Wanderers so long as its Dlamini at the helm.

This is a must-watch and must-win for both, particularly Wanderers who spent last season inactive due to their well-documented relegation court case. They won it but



▲ Green Mamba's Banele Sikhondze.

could not be registered for the season as it was already too late. Can they survive the axe this time, at least on this field of play? Only time will tell. What is clear is that Bafana Shukela last gave Wanderers nothing sweeter after edging them twice in the 2023/24 season.

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH:

- Mlamuli 'Mlaba' Nkambule (M. Wanderers Midfielder)
- 2. Rightwell Shiba (Ubombo Sugar FC winger)

#### **HEAD-TO-HEAD:**

04/04/24 Ub. Sugar 2-1 M. Wanderers 09/12/23 M. Wanderers 3-4 Ub. Sugar **LOG POSITION:** 

U. Sugar FC - 14th (4 points)
M. Wanderers - 15th (2 points)
PERFORMANCE GUIDE:
Ubombo Sugar FC
D W L L L
M. Wanderers
L D L D L
PREVIOUS MATCH RESULT:
Ub. Sugar 0-1 G. Mamba

M. Sea Birds 4-0 M. Wanderers

#### 'Stingers' test for G. Mamba

Green Mamba vs. Ezulwini United Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 Venue: KaLanga Technical Centre, Siteki Kick-off: 3.30pm

With the lure of the top spot right in their faces, Green Mamba will be aiming high here, and they must if they are to dislodge current leaders Rangers. Only a goal difference stands between the leaders and second-placed Green Mamba.

Otherwise, both sides are all level on 10 points apiece. Green Mamba can topple Rangers, but only if they beat Ezulwini United or play a draw. Will it be an easy mission?

Certainly not. The Correctional Services side has had its own inconsistencies and is yet to convince amid winning their last two with 1-0 margins. Scoring for them in both wins, first against defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs and then Ubombo Sugar FC, was new signing Banele 'Pupu' Sikhondze.

They will need him to keep up his form here as Ezulwini come motivated after edging capital city giants Mbabane Swallows 1-0 last weekend. The Stingers, as Ezulwini



▲ Manzini Wanderers players starting XI during a recent tournament.



▲ Ubombo Sugar's Melusi Tfwala.



▲ Ezulwini United veteran player Mphucuko 'Smoothies' Dlamini celebrating with one of the teammates.



▲ Green Mamba players celebrating a goal in one of their past matches.

also fondly goes, know that if they can cause yet another big upset, the top spot is theirs, at least momentarily as more fixtures get underway on Friday. Ezulwini would go on 11 points, one better than current leaders Rangers with another win. It would also be such a leap for the Stingers to move from eighth to the summit.

The minnows, underdogs against Mabona Ahlonishwe (Green Mamba), have played a game less than their rivals, which is all the reason winning makes sense for them until they play the pending fixture.

Should either side lose, they will be risking a drastic drop in the standings as it is currently tight and close between the teams. Ezulwini would drop about three places, depending on other results. Green Mamba could also drop from second to mid table if some of the teams behind them win their games. It is quite a test for Green Mamba.

Can they be consistent and earn a third win? Or will it be Ezulwini achieving yet another big result? They also believe they can finally challenge for the league this season, and so far, they have shown that ambition. It looks set to be a good game.

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH:

- 1. Banele 'Pupu' Sikhondze (Green Mamba Attacking Midfielder)
- Mphucuko 'Smoothies' Dlamini (Ezulwini United Wing Midfielder)

#### HEAD-TO-HEAD:

01/03/25 G. Mamba 0-0 Ez. United 04/10/24

Ez. United o-5 G. Mamba **LOG POSITIONS:** 

G. Mamba - 2nd (10 points) Ez. United - 8th (8 points)

PERFORMANCE GUIDE: G. Mamba

WLDWW

Ez. United

D W D W

**PREVIOUS MATCH RESULT:** Ubombo Sugar FC 0-1 G. Mamba

M. Swallows 0-1 Ez. United

## International course for 'Mdlikiza'



▲ECSA Secretary Mbongeni'Mdlikiza' Gamedze.

#### By Sibusiso Masilela

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#### ESWATINI Cue Sports Association Secretary Mbongeni 'Mdlikiza' Gamedze is expanding his expertise in the sport.

Gamedze is currently out of the country in Kenya to attend a world officials' seminar in Nairobi.

The five days course will be conducted by international instructor Jorgen Sandman under the auspices of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and World Pool Association.

Eswatini Cue Sports Association President

Muntu Dlamini announced the trip when contacted.

"ECSA Secretary General jets off to Nairobi, Kenya for the International Olympic Committee (IOC)/World Pool Association (WPA) Workshop for match officials, dupped as Workshop for Coaches," he said

He also thanked the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (EOC-GA) for funding Gamedze's trip.

"We are grateful for the support of EOC-GA, which contributes to the development of the sport in the country," he said.

ECSA was recently granted EOCGA membership, which makes them eligible to compete in the Olympic and Commonwealth Games.

## Over six countries in World Taekwondo course



▲ Eswatini Taekwondo Association Secretary Sizwe Mabuza with international delegates during the ongoing course.

#### By Sibusiso Masilela

sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

#### UPLIFTING sports tourism in the country.

Over six nations are in the country for the World Taekwondo seminar currently taking place at Esibayeni Lodge.

The delegates are coming from South Korea, Hungary, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Egypt, Lesotho, Malawi and Botswana, among others.

The course started on November 7, 2025, under the watchful eye of international recognised instructor Master Choe.

The event will be officially opened on November 13, 2025 by senior officials from the Eswatini Sport and Recreation Council and the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association.

The course is attended by World Taekwondo inspector Master Choe, and delegates are equipped with several referee components.

Eswatini Taekwondo Federation (ETF) Vice Secretary Mbongeni Sibandze said the course is proceeding smoothly.

"We are happy with the course as delegates are equipped with several components of the sport. We are looking forward to the opening ceremony and honoured to have such an important course in the country,

which will play a key role in the development of the sport,"he said.

The mother body will also send the national team to the African Taekwondo Union Zone VI club championships in November, to be held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

The national team qualified for the inaugural continental cup after excelling in the zonal qualifiers held two months ago in Maputo.

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art and combat sport involving primarily kicking techniques and punching. Depending on the style, Hyeong, Pumsae, or Teul are patterns that demonstrate a range of kicking, punching, and blocking techniques, gyeokpa is the art of breaking wooden boards, and in the combat sport kyorugi involves the kind of sparring seen in the Olympics. Taekwondo also sometimes involves the use of weapons such as swords and nunchucks (nunchaku). Taekwondo practitioners wear a uniform known as a dobok.

Taekwondo is originally a martial art that was developed during the 1940s and 1950s by Korean martial artists with experience in martial arts such as karate and Chinese martial arts.

In the early 1970s, a new style of Taekwondo was developed to promote it as a competitive sport, alongside its traditional martial arts form.

# ESWATIN Swaziland Bulling Society Creative Wester For Your Tiland Delivery

▲ Male juniors Phiwokuhle Sibandze and Zwelethu Mkonta with Tennis Association president Ncaba Mkhaliphi during a recent tournament.

#### ENTA gears for 2026 SADC championships

#### ... Juniors' tourney on the cards

#### By Sibusiso Masilela

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THE Eswatini National Tennis Association (ENTA) is intensifying preparations for the 2026 SADC junior championships.

The mother body will be hosting a junior's championships on November 29, 2025 at Matsapha UNESWA courts in preparation for the regional championships in January next year.

The selection tournament will feature boys Under 16 and Girls Under 14 in pursuit

of places in the national team.

ENTA national Development Coach Njabulo Mbhamali confirmed the latest news when reached for comment.

"We will soon embark on the process of selecting the junior national team for the regional championships that will take place next year. We urge teams to attend the competition so that their players can be part of the national team," he said.

He also thanked their sponsor Swaziland Building Society for continued support.

"We are grateful for the support of the sponsor, which contributes towards the development of the sport in the country," he said.



## Nsingizini Stunned



▲ Nsingizini's Kwakhe Thwala during the match against Tabankulu Celtics.

#### By Sibusiso Masilela

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MTN premier League defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs faltered on the road following their 2-0 defeat to stubborn Tabankulu Celtics.

This was during a game five pending fixture played at Tambankulu Stadium on Wednesday.

The home side goals were scored by former Young Buffaloes and Manzini Wanderers player Phiwokuhle Shabangu and Bongani Mhlanga during the last stanza, to deprive the visitors a chance of jumping to the summit of the MTN Premier League log standings.

The two sides were locked at 0-0 at half-

time

The Mandla Qhogi-led side are having nine points after five matches and were leapfrogged in the third spot by the youthful opponents.

Celtics jumped to position six with nine points after five matches following their second biggest win in the elite since beating Royal Leopards 3-0 at Mkhuzweni Technical Centre.

Nsingizini and Leopards are both fresh from representing the country in the 2025 CAF Champions League and Confederation Cup, respectively.

The Sugar belt side gained promotion through the promotion playoffs, where they got the better of Madlenya FC, Sidwashini United, and Lozitha Spurs.



▲ Tabankulu Celtics players before a matcg.

#### Instacash, Red Rhinos star scoops MulaSport NFD gong

#### **Stories by Chris Dlamini**

SILVERWARE is his thing.
Youngster Teboho 'Juries'
Dlamini, fresh from Manzini
Central High School, was on
Wednesday named the first
Player of the Month Award winner in the inaugural MulaSport
National First Division (NFD)

League. He won the October

gong valued at E2 500.

name some.

It was presented to him at the sponsor's offices in Manzini by its Country Manager Mukelo Magagula alongside Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) Brand, Marketing and Sponsorship Manager Lindokuhle Mthupha. Alongside the E2 500, Dlamini also got a gift bag with MulaSport branded items like their t-shirt, cap, and power bank, to

"I thank God for this. It's not an achievement but an accomplishment. I also thank my president at Rhinos, my coach Percy, for believing in me, my teammates, and my family.

"I would like to give honour to the brand that made me, Manzini Central High School, for marketing me well," he said in reaction to the



▲ MulaSport National First Division side Red Rhinos Teboho Juries'Dlamini displaying hiss cheque after he was named the October player of the month at the sponsors offices.

award

Dlamini said he was grateful to all the people who played a role in his life for him to be where he was when he was nobody at some point. He also said he felt great to be rewarded but attributed it to God, saying He gave him talent.

"I was a gold medal winner in 2024 with Manzini Central before we lost to Evelyn Baring in this year's final," confirmed Dlamini, who completed his high school last year.

He is on his second season at Rhinos, and they are currently at number two in the standings after Nkwene Sundowns. Interestingly, he was nominated alongside two Sundowns players but came out tops as he had helped his team stay at the summit all of October.

"We had three nominated players who all contributed to their teams' performance and positive results," said PLE's Mthupha.

She congratulated the youngster and said this should encourage him and the rest of the league players to work harder. Meanwhile, Mthupha confirmed the Nkwene Sundowns players to be Msimisi Dlamini and Mandlami Mdlovu.

#### ...'Cash out' more awards - MulaSport to Rhinos star

"WE won't tire handing you more awards."

These were motivational words said by MulaSport's Country Manager Mukelo Magagula during Red Rhinos' youngster Teboho 'Juries' Dlamini's October Player of the Month Award. Dlamini was presented the E2 500 award at the league's offices in Manzini on Wednesday.

"We are excited to venture into football with the PLE. We are so far impressed and hoping that we will recognise more awards to reward talent in the near future.

"We're also proud to present our first MulaSport National First Division League Player of the Month Award. Congratulations to Teboho! You need to know we expect to see you here again. We won't tire handing the Player of the prize increase from E2 000 to E2 500. Sponsor MTN Esward sponsors before Month online sports bettieved took over this year.

more awards to you," said Magagula.

He encouraged the youngster to go and keep putting up big performances, and he could find himself winning more gongs. Magagula also pointed out that they were quite pleased with how things had turned out in the league after five weeks of action. He said they were hopeful for a good run until the end of the season, with teams also showing tough competition.

Meanwhile, MulaSport pumped E4.5 million, split over three seasons. This saw even the Player of the Month gong prize increase from last season's E2 000 to E2 500. Elite league sponsor MTN Eswatini were the sponsors before MulaSport, the online sports betting company took over this year.



▲ October best player Teboho 'Juries' Dlamini recieving his prizes from MulaSport country Manager Mukelo Magagula and Premier League of Eswatini Brand Manager Lindokuhle Mthupha.







... Defending league champions suffer a demoralising league defeat at the hands of newcomers Tambankulu Celtics who cruised to a 2-0 win. P23