



# Eswatini Daily News

Friday 14  
November, 2025

▲ His Majesty King Mswati III posing with the ambassadors-designate namely Kang Bokwon, Republic of Korea, Noralyn Jubaira Baja, Republic of the Philippines and Tomas Ulieny, Czech Republic after the delivery of Letters of Credentials.

## New Ambassadors receive job creation mandate from King

By Delisa Magagula

HIS Majesty King Mswati III has received the credentials of three new non-resident ambassadors, underscoring the Kingdom of Eswatini's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and promoting economic development through international cooperation.

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▲ His Majesty King Mswati III posing with Ambassador Noralyn Jubaira Baja, Republic of the Philippines after receiving her credentials.



▲ His Majesty King Mswati III posing with Ambassadors-designate Kang Bokwon, Republic of Korea.

# New Ambassadors receive job creation mandate from King

HIS Majesty King Mswati III has received the credentials of three new non-resident ambassadors, underscoring the Kingdom of Eswatini’s commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and promoting economic development through international cooperation. The ambassadors-designate are Kang Bokwon, Republic of Korea, Noralyn Jubaira Baja, Republic of the Philippines and Tomas Ulieny, Czech Republic.

Prior to presenting their credentials to His Majesty, the ambassadors met with Senator Pholile Shakantu, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, for a courtesy call.

During the meeting, the diplomats were briefed on Eswatini’s strategic priorities, including investment opportunities, trade relations, and socio-economic initiatives.

Worth noting, letters of credence (or credentials) are formal diplomatic documents that officially appoint a diplomat as the ambassador to a foreign country.

They are addressed from the Head of State of the sending country to the Head of State of the receiving country (in this case, King Mswati III), asking them to give full credence to what the ambassador will say on behalf of their government.

In his address to the envoys at Lozitha Palace, King Mswati III highlighted job creation as a central priority of his leadership.

He emphasized that the Kingdom is focused on initiatives that provide employment opportunities, particularly for the youth, and encouraged the new ambassadors to explore collaborative programs that would benefit both Eswatini and their respective countries.

“We are now, all of us, living in a global world where in a number of times we have agreed as countries of the world that we need to fulfil especially the programmes of the Sustainable Development Goals. It has been clear that there is no country in the world that could

achieve the Sustainable Development Goals without the support of others,” King Mswati III said.

The King highlighted the importance of co-operation in key sectors such as agriculture, education, infrastructure, and investment.

He also urged business communities from the ambassadors’ countries to consider Eswatini as a destination for development and trade, while encouraging Eswatini entrepreneurs to explore similar opportunities abroad.

“Of course, there is already cooperation that is there, but of course there is always room for expansion towards this cooperation. We are looking forward that we will be able to sit down with each and every one of you to see where we can arrange some cooperation between our countries,” he added.

The ambassadors responded by expressing their nations’ commitment to deepening diplomatic and economic relations with Eswatini.

Kang Bokwon of the Republic of Korea highlighted Eswatini’s strategic position in Southern Africa and the potential for the Kingdom to serve as a regional hub for trade and investment.

Meanwhile Noralyn Jubaira Baja of the Philippines conveyed greetings from her President and emphasized the intention to strengthen bilateral ties and cooperation in economic and social development initiatives.

Tomas Ulieny of the Czech Republic also pledged support for programs that promote shared interests, highlighting areas where technical cooperation and investment could be expanded.

Following the presentations, the ambassadors expressed appreciation for the warm welcome extended by His Majesty and the Kingdom.

They affirmed their commitment to working closely with the Eswatini government to foster lasting partnerships.

Worth mentioning, this ceremony marks an important milestone in Eswatini’s diplomatic



▲ The King with Tomas Ulieny, Czech Republic after the delivery.

calendar. Since the beginning of the year, His Majesty has received credentials from several foreign envoys, reflecting the Kingdom’s growing engagement with the international community.

The focus remains on bolstering bilateral relations, attracting foreign investment, and supporting initiatives that drive job creation and economic development.

The government of Eswatini continues to emphasize that productive partnerships with other nations are essential to advancing the Kingdom’s socio-economic goals.

His Majesty’s engagements with the ambassadors signal a proactive approach to fostering cooperation that delivers tangible benefits to citizens, particularly through employment programs and investment opportunities.

“The Kingdom looks forward to collaborative initiatives that will strengthen trade, investment, and social development, in line with national priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals,” said His Majesty in closing.

Several recent presentations of Letters of Credence have occurred. On November 6, 2025, the King received letters from the High Commissioners of Botswana and Rwanda, as well as the Ambassador from Equatorial Guinea.

Noteworthy, in the last five months, King Mswati III has held multiple ceremonies at the

Lozitha Royal Palace to formally receive the credentials of 13 ambassadors and high commissioners, symbolizing the strengthening of Eswatini’s diplomatic ties with nations across the globe.

The ceremonies occurred on several dates, starting in late July 2025 with the Ambassador of Japan, Shimizu Fumio, and continuing into September with five envoys from various European Union member state.

October saw the reception of representatives from the State of Kuwait and the Russian Federation.

In November, just one week apart, the King welcomed another round of diplomats from countries including Botswana, Rwanda, Equatorial Guinea, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, and the Czech Republic, officially allowing all 13 envoys to begin their full diplomatic duties.

The King often assures the new envoys of the government’s full support and emphasizes cooperation in areas such as economic development, job creation, trade, tourism, and combating diseases like HIV/AIDS.

In turn, the ambassadors convey warm regards from their own heads of state and express their commitment to strengthening ties and exploring new avenues for collaboration, sometimes mentioning specific sectors like agriculture, infrastructure, and technology.





▲ Prime Minister Russell Dlamini engaging in talks at the Business Breakfast Meeting with the South African High Commission personnel.



▲ Manqoba Khumalo, Minister for Commerce, Industry and Trade (l) with Minister for Finance Neal Rijkenberg were also in attendance.

By Siphesihle Dlamini  
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PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini seized the opportunity at the Business Breakfast Meeting with the South African High Commission in Ezulwini on November 13, 2025, to articulate a bold vision for Eswatini’s economic future and its strategic partnership with South Africa.

Describing the gathering as “both an honour and a privilege,” Dlamini framed the event not merely as a forum for trade discussion but as a critical juncture to “chart a collective path toward transformation, resilience, and inclusive growth” between the two nations. Dlamini emphasised that Eswatini and South Africa are more than neighbours; they share a “natural cord of geography, culture, and a shared aspiration for sustainable prosperity.”

Reflecting on decades of political solidarity, he recalled how Eswatini opened its borders during apartheid to provide a “warm and loving home” for black South Africans fighting for freedom. Since Eswatini’s independence in 1968, South Africa has been a steadfast partner, establishing one of the first formal diplomatic ties and collaborating extensively in the labour, trade, and education sectors. The Prime Minister described this relationship as “defined by partnership, mutual respect, and shared development goals,” which has only deepened with South Africa’s democratic transition in 1994.

Addressing a sensitive topic, Dlamini stressed Eswatini’s unique Tinkhundla system of governance, also known as monarchical democracy. He stressed that the system is “deliberate,” merging “the good from the western system and the good from our traditional system,” and that Eswatini is “not apologetic about Tinkhundla.” Countering widespread misconceptions that the system lacks democratic principles, he explained that it is modelled on the British county system, using a First Past the Post voting method where individuals are “directly voted for based on merit.” Elected representatives then serve collectively under the constitutional monarch, who “provides stability and continuity.” Dlamini highlighted that the majority of emaSwati are “at peace with our system of governance,” as demonstrated by the country’s relative peace and stability compared to other regional states.

# Eswatini targets double –digit growth by 2029

... Urges stronger economic ties with South Africa



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## Hawks seize E900K drug haul at Oshoek Border

By Thokozani Mazibuko

SOUTH African authorities have intercepted a major drug consignment valued at approximately E900,000 at the Oshoek Border on Wednesday, in an operation that has once again highlighted the persistent challenge of cross-border drug trafficking between Eswatini and South Africa.

According to a statement released by the South African Police Service (SAPS), members of the Hawks' Secunda-based Serious Organised Crime Investigation Unit acted on intelligence received from SAPS of-

ficers stationed at the border post.

The operation led to the seizure of mandrax tablets and dagga concealed inside a South African-registered truck that had crossed into South Africa from Eswatini.

"The truck was stopped for inspection, and, upon a thorough search, law enforcement officers discovered a large quantity of mandrax tablets and dagga," SAPS reported. "The seized substances, with an estimated street value of R900,000, were handed over for forensic analysis."

The driver of the vehicle was immediately taken into custody and is expected to appear in court once formal charges are finalised. The authorities are investigating whether

the drugs were destined for local distribution networks or intended for onward transit to other provinces. The Hawks commended the swift coordination between border police and their organised crime investigators, describing it as a crucial example of effective inter-agency collaboration in combating narcotics smuggling.

"The success of this operation is a clear demonstration of our commitment to stopping the illegal drug trade that threatens communities across the country," said a police spokesperson.

Investigations are continuing to determine the origin of the narcotics and whether the case is linked to a broader cross-border syndicate.

## Four arrested in Mafutseni roadblock under INTERPOL-Led Operation Weka III

By Thokozani Mazibuko

POLICE at Mafutseni have arrested four men in two separate incidents during a roadblock conducted early this morning as part of the ongoing Operation Weka III, a week-long international law enforcement exercise coordinated by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni, a 35-year-old man from Luve was arrested at around 04:50 hours after being found in possession of a large consignment of dagga.

The suspect was travelling towards Manzini in a black Honda Fit when officers discovered the illicit herb concealed in the vehicle.

"The suspect has been charged with contravening the Pharmacy Act and is expected to appear before the Manzini Magistrates Court tomorrow," Mnguni said.

The arrest forms part of Operation Weka III, which focuses on curbing cross-border crime, drug trafficking, and the transportation of illegal goods through coordinated police efforts across multiple

countries under INTERPOL supervision.

In a separate incident during the same operation, police intercepted a blue Honda Fit carrying a cow's carcass being transported by three men aged 27, 23, and 21, all from Gamula. Preliminary investigations revealed that the trio had purchased the cow from a local resident but failed to obtain the necessary stock removal permit (lipasi) before transporting it.

"They were charged for contravening the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Regulations, which strictly prohibit the movement of livestock or animal carcasses without proper documentation," Mnguni added.

Assistant Superintendent Mnguni further commended the officers for their vigilance and reiterated the police service's commitment to working with regional and international partners to combat transnational crimes.

She urged members of the public to continue cooperating with law enforcement agencies and to refrain from engaging in any activity that violates the law, emphasizing that Operation Weka III will continue throughout the week with intensified roadblocks and inspections across the country.

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## Man hit by train dies near Sidvokodvo

By Thokozani Mazibuko

A 40-year-old man from Bulunga area tragically lost his life in the early hours of Tuesday morning after being struck by a train along the Sidvokodvo-Phuzamoya railway line near Tibusisweni Farm.

According to a police statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni, the fatal incident occurred at around 02:17 a.m. on November 12, 2025.

Preliminary reports indicate that the man was on or near the railway tracks when he

was hit by an oncoming train. "The victim sustained severe injuries and was rushed to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial (RFM) Hospital, where he was unfortunately certified dead upon arrival," Mnguni said.

Authorities are still investigating the circumstances that led to the accident, including whether the deceased was attempting to cross the tracks or was walking along them at the time.

Police have since appealed to members of the public to exercise caution around railway lines and to avoid walking or loitering near active train routes, especially during night hours. The identity of the deceased has been withheld pending notification of his next of kin.



# Select Home targets 500 housing units annually under new rent-to-own scheme

By Delisa Magagula

**SELECT Limited has announced plans to deliver at least 500 new housing units every year under its newly launched Select Home initiative a rent-to-own model designed to help ordinary Emaswati move from renting to full home ownership.**

The Chief Executive Officer for Select Limited Bheki Dlamini said the initiative, launched in partnership with Malkerns Square Eswatini, is part of the company's long-term strategy to diversify its loan portfolio and meet the housing needs of clients excluded from traditional mortgage systems.

"Our goal is to deliver over 500 units each year across Mbabane, Manzini and other parts of the country. With Select Home, clients will be able to rent a completed property while paying towards its ownership. Once the loan is fully paid, the home becomes theirs," Dlamini said during the launch at The Link in Matsapha.

He further said Select Home was introduced to close a critical housing gap in Eswatini by offering a pathway to ownership for low- and middle-income earners who often struggle to qualify for bank loans.

"This is not just about building homes it's about building futures for families who never thought owning a house was possible," he added.

The launch event was attended by Minister for Housing and Urban Development Apollo Maphalala, Her Worship the Mayor of Matsapha Councillor Lindiwe Dlamini and representatives from the private sector and property development community.

Minister Maphalala described the Select Home initiative as a practical solution that supports government's broader mission to promote accessible and affordable housing for all Emaswati.

"The government welcomes such private sector innovation because it strengthens our national effort to provide sustainable hous-

ing. A rent-to-own model makes it possible for families to own homes while living in them something many have long dreamed of," he said.

The partnership also features African Alliance Partner S'thofeni Ginindza, who said Select Home represents an intersection between financial innovation and social development.

Ginindza, who is the Board Chairman of the Eswatini Observer, highlighted African Alliance's continued involvement in investment and real estate ventures in the country, including its association with Pick n Pay Eswatini.

"This collaboration is about unlocking access to property ownership for Emaswati. It shows that investment and impact can coexist," he said.

Ginindza added that Select Home builds on the successful property developments already underway at Malkerns Square, which is being expanded to include additional apartment units and commercial space.

"We are not just constructing buildings we are shaping sustainable communities that integrate homes, retail and recreation," he said.

Minister Maphalala also praised Matsapha's continued growth as an investor-friendly town.

"This development comes at a time when Eswatini is prioritising urban growth and sustainable settlement planning. Every new unit built under this programme brings us closer to achieving our national housing goals," said Maphalala.

Meanwhile the 500-unit annual target marks one of the most ambitious housing commitments by a private lender in recent years.

Select Limited, which has over 25 years of experience in providing credit solutions, said it will use its financial expertise to make the rent-to-own model accessible and manageable for clients.

According to Dlamini, Select Home's long-term plan is to ensure that by the time a client completes their payments, the title deed



▲ The official opening of Select Home.

and full ownership are transferred without delay. He said the company has structured the product in a way that balances affordability and ownership security.

"For many families, renting has always felt like a dead-end. With Select Home, every payment moves you closer to owning your house," he said.

The initiative comes amid growing demand for housing in urban areas, where access to mortgages remains limited.

Select Limited says the rent-to-own model will provide financial relief for citizens who have steady income but lack collateral or credit history.

Minister Maphalala said such models align perfectly with government's housing policy, which seeks to involve both public and private players in addressing Eswatini's housing backlog. "This is a model that promotes dignity, stability and economic inclusion,"

he said. Select Limited confirmed that future projects under Select Home will include developments not only in Malkerns but across other urban centres, with the potential to create jobs in construction, property management and finance.

Ginindza said the collaboration is a milestone for the real estate sector, noting that African Alliance's investment philosophy supports projects that create long-term value for communities.

"As the country continues to urbanise, partnerships like this one will define the next generation of development," he said.

With Select Home now officially launched, Eswatini joins a growing list of African countries exploring rent-to-own as an alternative to traditional housing finance.

The first phase of units is expected to open for occupation in 2026, marking a new chapter for local property ownership.

## Nothando Hlophe tops SA Spotify daily chart with 'Methodist Medley'

**GOSPEL singer Nothando Hlophe has achieved a significant milestone in 2025, becoming the second solo female gospel artist this year to reach the top positions on the South African Spotify Daily Chart.**

Her track, Methodist Medley, peaked at #15, surpassing Xolly Mncwango's Ungukuphila (#17) and following Nontokozi Mkhize's Esandleni (#2).

Methodist Medley recorded its highest daily streams yet, reaching 64,000 plays on the S.A Spotify Daily Chart. This performance demonstrates Hlophe's growing influence in the South African gospel scene and her ability to connect with listeners through a blend of contemporary and traditional gospel elements.

Earlier in 2025, Xolly Mncwango reached #17 with Ungukuphila in April, while Nontokozi Mkhize held the #2 spot with Esandleni between January and February. Hlophe's achievement positions her among the leading female gospel artists of the year and highlights the competitive-

ness of the genre on streaming platforms. Methodist Medley showcases Hlophe's signature vocal strength and emotive delivery, combining heartfelt lyrics with dynamic musical arrangements. Fans and new listeners alike have praised the track for its spiritual depth and modern gospel appeal, contributing to its rapid streaming growth.

This milestone signals continued momentum for Nothando Hlophe in 2025. As streaming data reflects a shift toward digital platforms for gospel music consumption, Methodist Medley sets the bar for upcoming releases and underscores the prominence of female voices in South African gospel music.

Listeners can stream Methodist Medley on Spotify and other major platforms, making it accessible to a wide audience eager to experience one of the standout gospel tracks of the year.

(Gospel Music Magazine)





▲ Dignitaries from the Ministry of Agriculture during the launch.



### SEZ licensing process lengthy – Minister

THE process of obtaining a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) licence in Eswatini remains overly complicated, Minister for Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo admitted on Thursday.

Speaking during a meeting with the Portfolio Committee on Commerce, Industry and Trade in Mbabane, Khumalo said the ministry had identified several procedural bottlenecks that discouraged potential investors.

“The process of getting the SEZ licence has proven to be lengthy and difficult. Many local and international developers have raised concerns about delays and unclear requirements,” he said.

He explained that under the current SEZ Act of 2018, licence applications are reviewed by multiple agencies including the Eswatini Revenue Service (ERS), Central Bank of Eswatini (CBE), and Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) which often leads to duplication and long waiting periods.

“We are trying to reform the system to give developers more autonomy and to adopt a one-stop-shop model,” the minister said.

Khumalo added that the SEZ Amendment Bill of 2024 proposes a streamlined approval process, allowing qualified developers to apply and receive feedback from one central office rather than multiple ministries. He said this reform would not only reduce turnaround time but also improve transparency and accountability in the licensing process. The minister also noted that despite several SEZ developer licences having been issued in past years, no company has fully commenced operations in the zones.

“This shows us that the current system is not working efficiently. We need to address the gaps that are holding back real investment,” he said.

# Bill to offer full VAT, customs duty exemptions for SEZ

Stories By Delisa Magagula

THE proposed Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Amendment Bill of 2024 offers full exemptions on Value Added Tax (VAT) and customs duties for capital goods, machinery, and raw materials imported by businesses operating within the designated zones.

Minister for Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khumalo, said the incentive is part of a broader package designed to attract investors and stimulate growth in Eswatini’s manufacturing and technology sectors.

He was speaking on Thursday during a meeting with the Portfolio Committee on Commerce, Industry and Trade in Mbabane, where the ministry presented proposed reforms to improve the investment climate.

Khumalo said the tax and customs exemptions were introduced to make Eswatini competitive in the region and to ease the financial pressure on investors setting up within the zones.

“These exemptions will allow businesses to save significant amounts during the setup phase. They will free up capital for operations and expansion, which is key for job creation and economic transformation,” said Khumalo.

The SEZ framework, first introduced under the 2018 Act, was created to encourage the



▲ Minister for Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo.

establishment of export-oriented industries by providing fiscal incentives and streamlined administrative support.

However, the minister acknowledged that implementation has been slow due to procedural gaps and complex licensing

requirements.

He added that the Amendment Bill now before Parliament seeks to remove barriers that have discouraged both local and foreign developers.

“Our aim is to ensure that investors can focus on production rather than getting caught up in red tape,” Khumalo said.

Meanwhile the minister noted that the incentives were in line with His Majesty King Mswati III’s vision to transform Eswatini into a hub for advanced technology, research, and biotechnology.

He said the SEZs were envisioned as engines of innovation that would attract high-value industries and modern skills into the economy.

Khumalo added that the VAT and customs duty exemptions would also apply to upgrades or expansions within existing SEZ projects, allowing continuous reinvestment without additional import costs.

Worthnoting, Eswatini has two officially designated SEZs the Sikhuphe Special Economic Zone and the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) at Nokwane both equipped with infrastructure ready for occupation.

Khumalo and senators said the new Bill also aligns Eswatini’s SEZ incentives with those of neighbouring countries, offering competitive terms such as extended corporate tax holidays and simplified approval processes.

## Bill opens leeway for investors to boost economy

THE Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Amendment Bill of 2024 will open greater opportunities for both local and foreign investors to drive Eswatini’s economic growth, Deputy Senate President Ndumiso Mdluli has said.

Mdluli was speaking in Mbabane on Thursday during the session where Minister Manqoba Khumalo presented the Bill to the Portfolio Committee on Commerce, Industry and Trade. He said the proposed changes were designed to make the investment environment more accessible and responsive to business needs.

“This Bill opens leeway for investors to come in and help boost our economy. We are reviewing legislation to remove barriers that have slowed down investment,” he said.

In addition he said Parliament recognised that the original SEZ Act of 2018 contained several limitations that restricted investor participation.

The new amendments, he said, would simplify procedures and provide clearer guidance for developers. Mdluli added that SEZs remained a crucial part of Eswatini’s development strategy, with potential to create jobs, expand industrial capacity, and increase export earnings.

He also commended the inclusion of stronger monitoring mechanisms within the Bill, aimed at addressing money laundering concerns raised by international partners.

“We cannot afford to lose investor confidence due to regulatory loopholes. This Bill ensures that Eswatini remains both open and compliant,” said Mdluli.

Mdluli urged the ministry to prioritise the creation of a centralised investment desk at the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP),



▲ A section of the Senators.

where ministries could coordinate services under one roof.

“If each ministry has personnel stationed at the RSTP, it will make the one-stop-shop model a reality,” he said.

He further welcomed fiscal incentives proposed under the Bill, including corporate tax holidays and exemptions on VAT and customs duties, saying these would make Eswatini competitive in attracting manufacturing,

renewable energy, and ICT investments.

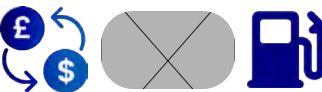
“Investors are drawn to efficiency and stability. The amendments before us today are a step toward both,” said Mdluli.

The Deputy Senate President concluded by saying Parliament was committed to working with the ministry to ensure the SEZ framework delivers tangible results for citizens through job creation, innovation, and technology transfer.



### FX RATES

Notes/Cash		
	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	16.8536	17.3187
G.B. Pound	22.1877	22.8580
EURO	19.5936	20.2012
Bank Rate (July 2023)	7.50%	
Prime Rate (July 2023)	11%	
Inflation (July 2023)	4.5%	
Petrol	E21.60/Litre	
Diesel	E22.90/Litre	
Paraffin	E17.25/Litre	





Stories By Delisa Magagula

# Central Banks inks major infrastructure advisory deal

## ... with Bank of Mozambique

“Strong institutions are the backbone of economic development and stability. Today, we take a vital step forward in ensuring that our banking infrastructure not only meets but exceeds the standards of modernity and resilience essential in today’s global environment,” he said.

The partnership builds on previous engagement between the two central banks. “Not long ago, Governor Mnisi hosted our board at your premises, which opened doors for our technical teams to engage further,” the BoM Governor.

“Whilst navigating the tender process for our project, our team received invaluable guidance from your engineers and architects, making the process a great success,” said Mnisi. As the CBE formally handed over the construction site to the EPC contractor, strict timelines and budgets were emphasized. “When we requested technical support for proper implementation, you did not hesitate to formalize this cooperation, a gesture evident through our long-standing cordial relationship,” said Dr Phil.

Meanwhile experts say this move signals a growing trend in the SADC region of peer-to-peer collaboration between central banks, with Eswatini leveraging Mozambican expertise instead of relying solely on



▲ Governor of the Bank of Mozambique Rogério Lucas Zandamela and Eswatini Governor Dr Phil Mnisi during the signing of the MOU.

international consulting firms.

With visible infrastructure investment, the CBE is expected to strengthen not only its operational capacity but also regional confidence in the Eswatini financial

sector. The project is poised to generate employment in engineering, construction, and technology, while positioning the central bank as a hub of modern financial infrastructure.

## ... CBE taps Mozambique expertise in strategic infrastructure push

THE signing of the MoU between the Central Bank of Eswatini (CBE) and the Banco de Moçambique (BoM) represents a decisive step in regional integration and institutional modernization.

The agreement focuses on delivering Eswatini’s new headquarters while transferring technical skills and strengthening oversight capacity.

This partnership represents a solid expression of solidarity, trust, and a shared belief that by joining our strengths, we can achieve more together than we could alone, said the Governor of the Bank of Mozambique is Rogério Lucas Zandamela. Governor Dr. Mnisi reinforced the strategic importance, stating, by leveraging the expertise and experience of Banco de Moçambique.

“We are confident that we will enhance the design, construction, and supervision of our new Central Bank complex, a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a symbol of stability, progress, and innovation for Eswatini,” said Mnisi

The MoU details advisory roles across multiple technical fields, including civil and structural engineering, technology infrastructure, mechanical, electrical and hydraulic systems, and physical security. Regular consultations, project documentation reviews, and technical recommendations will guide the execution of the project.

The BoM governor emphasised the bank’s track record saying they have acquired a lot of experience over the years.

“Our participation draws on the experience we have acquired through the construction and management of similar large-scale infrastructures, such as headquarters towers, cultural and sports complexes and modern branch buildings across Mozambique,” he said.



▲ The Bank of Mozambique and Central Bank of Eswatini executives during the signing of the MOU.

The collaboration is expected to strengthen Eswatini’s technical capacity and risk management in complex infrastructure projects.

Through this Memorandum, Banco de Moçambique reaffirms its unwavering commitment to accompany the Central Bank of Eswatini in this important endeavour, the BoM governor added.

Industry observers note the MoU signals that Eswatini is investing in tangible infrastructure while simultaneously building institutional capabilities. By formally

integrating a peer central bank into its project oversight, the CBE is raising the technical standards required of contractors and project managers.

“This initiative opens doors for local contractors, engineers, and technology vendors to work under strict international-level oversight, while benefiting from knowledge transfer from Mozambican experts,” construction sector analyst Thabile Vilakati commented.

Governor Mnisi concluded the signing ceremony by thanking both the Mozambican

team and the people of Eswatini. “May this collaboration stand as a model of regional unity and shared progress and inspire further cooperation initiatives across our region,” he said.

Worth noting, the new headquarters is scheduled for completion under strict budgetary and timeline controls. Analysts say the building will not only be a symbol of institutional modernisation but may also influence commercial development in Ezulwini and serve as a benchmark for future regional central bank collaborations.



# Nigeria drops planned fuel import tariff



▲ Cranes sit at an oil rig facility, in Lagos Nigeria.

NIGERIA has ended plans to impose a 15% import duty on petrol and diesel amid assurances of adequate supply during the year-end holidays, the downstream regulator said on Thursday.

The tariff, approved by President Bola Tinubu as part of fiscal reforms to boost non-oil revenues, was disclosed in a leaked government memo last month. It was supposed to take effect in December.

“The implementation of the 15% ad-valorem import duty on imported premium motor spirit and diesel is no longer in view,” the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) said in a statement.

Fuel marketers had lobbied against the measure, warning it could restrict imports and leave the country reliant on a single source, the 650,000-barrel-per-day Dangote Petroleum Refinery in Lagos.

Africa’s biggest oil producer spends millions of dollars each year importing fuels and this has continued even after the Dangote Petroleum Refinery began processing crude last year.

The NMDPRA assured buyers of adequate supply during the holiday and warned against panic buying.

“The Authority will continue to monitor supply and take necessary steps to avoid disruptions, especially during this peak demand period,” it said.

(Rueters)

## South Africa’s Cell C sets offer price ahead of Johannesburg listing

SOUTH African mobile operator Cell C and The Prepaid Company are targeting gross proceeds of up to 6.5 billion rand (\$375 million) from the sale of shares ahead of Cell C’s planned listing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

The offer comprises up to 173.4 million ordinary shares, alongside an additional 9.52 million shares available through an overallotment option, collectively representing up to 53.8% of Cell C’s issued share capital post-listing, Cell C said in its abridged pre-listing statement on Thursday.

The offer price has been set in a range of 29.50 rand to 35.50 rand per share. The offer opened in the morning of November 13 and

will close at midday on November 21, the statement read.

The sale of shares is being done by TPC via a private placement to select investors ahead of the listing. Cell C is majority owned by Blue Label Unlimited (BLUJ.J)

, opens new tab, which has a 53.57% stake in the mobile operator through its subsidiary TPC.

Cell C said the offer includes an allocation of up to 68 million shares to a new empowerment ownership structure, with approximately 2.4 billion rand worth of shares earmarked for the vehicle.

(Rueters)



▲ South African mobile operator Cell C and The Prepaid Company are targeting gross proceeds of up to 6.5 billion rand (\$375 million) from the sale of shares.



▲ Representation of cryptocurrencies are seen in this illustration.

## Discovery partners with Luno

... to offer first bank app crypto trading in SA

DISCOVERY Bank is set to become the first lender in South Africa to integrate crypto into its mobile platform, allowing customers to trade cryptocurrencies directly in its banking app from December.

The feature is being launched in partnership with London-based crypto exchange firm Luno and will allow clients to link their existing accounts to the Discovery digital banking app and buy, hold and sell crypto assets like bitcoin and ethereum.

“The financial world is evolving fast, and crypto assets have matured to become an accessible, mainstream asset class,” Discovery Bank CEO Hylton Kallner said in a statement.

“Our clients - and South Africans more

generally - are already engaged in this market, with 1 in 10 people holding crypto assets, and our regulation leading in the region and aligning with global norms.”

The digital bank, launched in 2021, delivered its first profit during the second half of its financial year, ended June 30.

Its competitors include the likes of Absa Bank, FirstRand’s First National Bank, Standard Bank, Capitec Bank and Old Mutual Bank.

South Africa’s Financial Sector Conduct Authority, which began licensing crypto service providers in 2023, warned consumers about the risks of volatile prices.

Discovery said its partnership complies with local regulations and includes robust safeguards.



# Delayed payments, broken deals put Egypt's grain buyer under scrutiny



▲ A farmer shows wheat grains at a field in Al Qalyubia Governorate, Egypt.

**MOUNTING** trade tensions that earlier this year led to a drop in Egypt's wheat imports have triggered a shake-up at the country's new state grains buyer, as a newly appointed leader moves to restore credibility, according to trade and industry sources.

For decades, Egypt ran a transparent tender system to secure supplies for a bread subsidy programme that feeds tens of millions of people and is a cornerstone of social stability. The huge purchases make Egypt

one of the world's top wheat importers and a benchmark for global prices.

But the new military-linked agency Future of Egypt, which took over purchasing in December, ditched the formal tenders of predecessor the General Authority for Supply Commodities (GASC) in favour of informal negotiations, six traders at global suppliers of wheat and vegetable oils to Egypt told Reuters.

Delayed payments and repeated attempts by the new agency to renegotiate prices or cancel agreed contracts when global wheat

and vegetable oil prices fell were widely viewed by traders as defaults—something unheard of under GASC, six traders said. These practices strained relationships with suppliers and were a major factor behind the sharp drop in Egypt's wheat imports in the first half of 2025, the six traders said.

Egypt's public tenders "long served as a barometer for global physical wheat prices," said Alexander Karavaytsev, senior economist at the International Grains Council.

"The shift to direct negotiations under Mostakbal Misr has reduced market transparency and likely slowed dealmaking, which may have discouraged some suppliers," he said, using the Arabic name for Future of Egypt.

In recent weeks, some global suppliers resumed sales to the new agency following the appointment of former GASC official Yousria Yusry Mohamed to oversee international purchases, three of the traders told Reuters. They said Mohamed was a respected official they dealt with frequently at GASC, bringing a level of familiarity and professionalism they were used to when dealing with the previous state agency.

Her appointment helped restore confidence, with some suppliers saying payments have since been initiated in a timely manner and contracts fulfilled, they said.

Future of Egypt, the president's office and Egypt's Supply Ministry did not respond to requests for comment for this story.

Global grain traders such as Cargill, ADM, Louis Dreyfus Company (LDC), Soufflet, Bunge, Olam and Solaris have been among Egypt's major suppliers in recent years,

along with Russia's Aston and Ukraine's Nibulon. The companies did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment regarding the recent changes to Egypt's national grain buyer.

## WHEAT IMPORTS SLUMP

Egypt imported around 5.2 million metric tons of wheat in the first half of 2025, a quarter less than the same period last year, according to shipping and trading data reviewed by Reuters. The government's share of those imports dropped by over half to around 1.6 million tons. This figure does not include domestic purchases, if any, made through brokers or private companies.

At one point in April, Egypt's wheat stocks fell to a little over a month's worth in storage, with another two months under negotiation, according to a trader and a person with direct knowledge of the matter, who reviewed internal records.

That was well below the government's target to hold six months' worth of grain, and also below the seven months held in mid-2024, according to previously announced government data. The buffer was restored when the local harvest arrived later in April, the two people said.

The agency had slowed imports in anticipation of this year's large local harvest, one of the sources said. Reuters could not establish whether payment issues under Future of Egypt played a part in lower stocks.

Karavaytsev forecast Egypt's imports would recover in the second half of the year. The country's crop was likely to shrink next season, he said, which would be a test for the new agency. (Reuters)

## Paramilitary force pushes east in new escalation of Sudan's war

**THE** paramilitary force battling the army in Sudan's civil war is shifting its focus eastward after consolidating its grip over Darfur last month, reigniting violence and launching drone attacks across the country's oil-producing southern areas.

Escalating drone strikes and new deployments of troops and weapons by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and the army suggest both sides are now centring their efforts on Kordofan, a region comprised of three states that serves as a buffer between the RSF's western Darfur strongholds and the army-held states in the east.

The RSF accepted a ceasefire proposal by the United States last week after an international outcry over accounts that it had killed large groups of civilians as it overran al-Fashir, the army's last significant holdout in Darfur.

The army has not agreed to the ceasefire, which could provide a window for more deliveries of desperately needed humanitarian aid after 2-1/2 years of conflict, and fighting has not abated.

### WITNESS ACCOUNTS OF REVENGE ATTACKS

The RSF started moving on Kordofan at the same time as it took al-Fashir late last month, seizing the town of Bara in North Kordofan state, a crucial strategic link between Darfur and central Sudan. The army had recaptured the town just two months earlier.

According to Amy Pope, head of the International Organization for Migration, up to 50,000 people have been displaced from Kordofan since then.



▲ Khalil, a young man from Bara, who said that he was shot and wounded in his hand by a Rapid Support Forces (RSF) member, poses in Omdurman, Sudan.

Echoing reports from al-Fashir, where tens of thousands were also displaced but many more are unaccounted for, survivors from Bara, who gave only their first names for fear of retribution against their families, described revenge attacks and summary executions against those accused of supporting the army.

"They said you celebrated with the army ... we have to kill you," said one escapee, Khalil, speaking to Reuters with his arm in a sling in army-controlled Omdurman, part of Sudan's capital. He said he had sat in a row with eight other men, two of whom were killed, as an RSF soldier fired on them.

Another man, Ismail, described hiding in-

side a house as men were shot in the street, until he was able to pay a fighter to escort him and his family out of the city.

A third man, Mohamed, said that when RSF troops arrived at his house he could hear his father fighting back and being fatally shot outside the door. Bands of RSF fighters entered the house, beat him and others, and demanded money and gold, he said. He left the city on foot, hiding from fighters and vehicles.

Emergency Lawyers, a Sudanese activist group, said hundreds were killed in Bara.

Reuters could not independently verify the accounts of the violence.

Asked for comment, the RSF said the army

had blocked every attempt for peace. "Any place where the army is present is a legitimate target and we will attack in any area in Kordofan, Khartoum, or Port Sudan," an RSF leader said.

The RSF did not address a request for comment on the accounts of killings in Bara. The RSF says reports of widespread abuses in al-Fashir and elsewhere are exaggerated and that it is investigating any that may have happened.

### SIGNS OF A MILITARY BUILD-UP

Fighting may now turn to North Kordofan's capital, El Obeid, one of Sudan's largest cities. Two eyewitnesses told Reuters they saw the army and allied forces amassing troops and equipment in the city earlier this week, while the RSF was deployed to the east.

The town of Babanusa in West Kordofan state, home to a major army base, is also surrounded by RSF soldiers, residents told Reuters. Civilians mostly fled the city during earlier fighting.

In South Kordofan, the RSF and allied fighters in the SPLM-N armed group are surrounding the army in the cities of Kadugli and nearby al-Dalanj and fighting has escalated, according to an SPLM-N source.

A global hunger monitor assessed last week that Kadugli was experiencing famine as of September, and that al-Dalanj was likely also in famine, mirroring the impact of the siege on al-Fashir.

Witnesses and sources have reported signs of a broader military build-up.

An army source and a source close to the SPLM-N said the armed group had received new weapons via South Sudan.

(Reuters)



# Disney warns of potentially long distribution dispute with YouTube TV, shares fall

WALT Disney signaled on Thursday it was girding for a potentially prolonged fight with YouTube TV over distribution of its television channels, worrying investors about the outlook for its already declining TV business and pushing its shares down 6.6%.

The company also missed quarterly revenue expectations as the cable weakness overshadowed strong growth in the company's streaming and parks businesses that powered a profit beat.

On a post-earnings call, Chief Financial Officer Hugh Johnston told analysts Disney has "built a hedge" into its forecasts assuming the negotiations could drag on.

Disney's networks disappeared from YouTube TV - the fourth-largest pay-TV provider in the U.S. with about 10 million subscribers - on October 30 in the latest carriage rights dispute between the Alphabet unit and a major media company. NBCUniversal content had also briefly gone dark on YouTube TV earlier this year due to a similar dispute.

Morgan Stanley analysts estimate a 14-day blackout on YouTube TV would cost Disney about \$60 million in revenue. The tense discussions underscore YouTube TV's rapid growth as well as Google's (GOOG-L.O), opens new tab vast financial resources, which give it greater leverage in negotiations with media companies.

"The deal that we have proposed is equal to or better than what other large distributors have already agreed to," Disney CEO Bob Iger said, referring to the talks with YouTube TV.

"And while we've been working tirelessly to close this deal and restore our channel to the platform, it's also imperative that we make sure that we agree with a deal that reflects the value that we deliver, which both



▲ A smartphone with displayed "Disney" logo is seen on the keyboard in front of displayed "Streaming service" words in this illustration.

YouTube, by the way, and Alphabet have told us is greater than the value of any other provider."

## BUYBACK, DIVIDEND BOOST

The media and entertainment giant also unveiled plans to boost its dividend by 50% and double its share buyback plan for fiscal 2026.

It posted adjusted earnings per share of \$1.11 for its fourth quarter ending in September, a 3% decline from a year earlier but 6 cents above an average LSEG estimate.

Profit rose in Disney's theme parks unit, partially from an expansion of the U.S. cruise ship business and growth at Disneyland Paris.

Earnings at its streaming business surged 39% to \$352 million. Disney said it added

12.5 million subscribers to Disney+ and Hulu during the quarter, reaching a total of 196 million.

A new distribution deal with cable and broadband provider Charter Communications (CHTR.O), opens new tab helped draw new streaming customers, Chief Financial Officer Hugh Johnston told Reuters.

Box office smash "Lilo & Stitch" debuted on Disney+ during the quarter and racked up 14.3 million views in its first five days, he said.

Disney has been remaking itself to adjust to the industry-wide decline of traditional broadcast and cable TV. It has invested in new theme park attractions and cruise ships and worked to lure subscribers to its streaming services.

CEO Bob Iger undertook aggressive cost-cutting when he returned to Disney in 2022. His current contract expires at the end of 2026, and Disney has said it will name Iger's successor early next year.

## TRADITIONAL TV DECLINE

Thursday's earnings report reflected a continued slide in television fees and advertising revenue, but the company projected confidence in the next two years.

Disney forecast double-digit adjusted EPS growth for fiscal 2026, in line with its previous forecast. The company also said it expected double-digit adjusted EPS growth for fiscal 2027.

The company's board declared a dividend of \$1.50 per share, up from \$1 a share, and doubled its stock buyback to \$7 billion in fiscal 2026.

In the just-ended quarter, Disney's revenue was comparable to a year ago at \$22.5 billion but shy of the \$22.75 billion analyst forecast.

Operating income at the entertainment division slumped by more than a third to \$691 million after this year's films failed to match the success of last year's hits "Inside Out 2" and "Deadpool & Wolverine."

Profit at the traditional television unit declined 21% to \$391 million, and income from ESPN slipped too.

The experiences unit that includes theme parks posted operating income of \$1.88 billion, up 13% from a year ago. Part of the growth came from more passenger days on Disney cruise ships, the company said.

"This was another year of great progress as we strengthened the company by leveraging the value of our creative and brand assets and continued to make meaningful progress in our direct-to-consumer businesses," Iger said in a statement.

(Reuters)

# Blue Origin to renew Mars satellite launch bid as geomagnetic storm fades

BLUE Origin's New Glenn rocket, carrying two satellites designed to measure space weather on Mars, is back on track for another launch attempt this week, the company said on Wednesday, after a string of delays forced by cloudy skies and a geomagnetic storm.

The latest 90-minute launch window at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida was set for Thursday, starting a few minutes before 3 p.m. (2000 GMT), according to an update posted by Jeff Bezos' space venture on its website.

The new launch time coincided with forecasts from the U.S. Space Weather Prediction Center showing a diminished risk to spacecraft and satellites from elevated solar activity on Thursday.

New Glenn, a two-stage, heavy-lift rocket standing 32 stories tall, was previously slated for blastoff on Sunday on a mission to deliver two Mars-bound satellites to space for NASA.

The flight would mark a major milestone for Blue Origin as its first major science mission for a paying customer, and the company's first launch of any kind since its inaugural New Glenn flight in January.

But the flight ended up scrubbed on Sunday because of heavy cloud cover. The mission was then rescheduled for Wednesday, but Blue Origin called off the launch again after a severe geomagnetic storm watch was posted.

The storm was unleashed by a surge in high-energy charged particles spewed into space earlier this week from large eruptions on the sun's surface called "coronal mass

ejections."

The resulting stream of charged-particle radiation, or plasma, was measured on Earth on Wednesday at G-4, or "severe" levels, one step down from the highest stage of G-5 or "extreme," but it was expected to fade on Thursday.

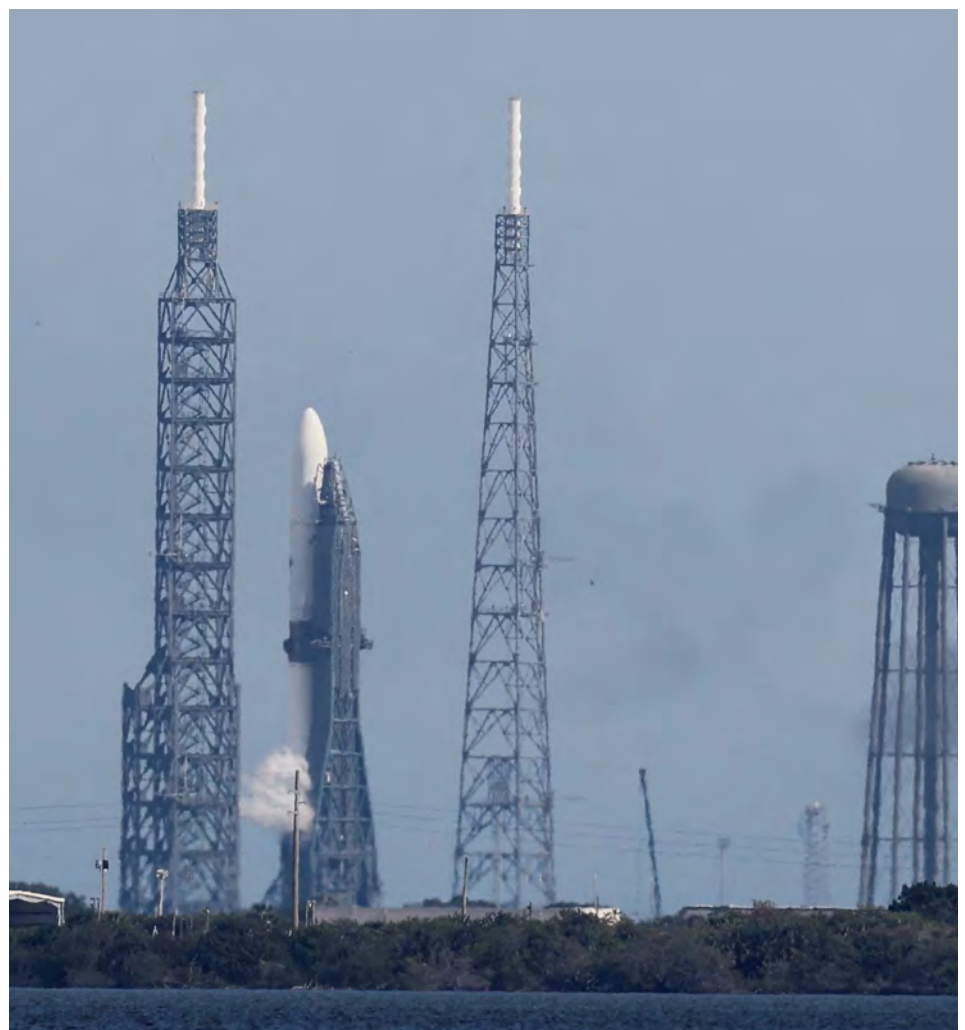
Geomagnetic storms are known to disrupt radio and satellite communications. They also can increase atmospheric density, creating intense friction or drag on satellites and other spacecraft in low-Earth orbit, as occurred in February 2022 when 40 Starlink satellites newly launched by SpaceX were disabled.

Elevated levels of charged particles from the sun can also more easily escape Earth's protective magnetic field and collide more vigorously with molecules in the atmosphere, heightening the extent of colorful aurora displays visible in the night skies, mostly in polar regions.

The vibrant green and pink displays of Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis, were reported across unusually large swaths of the United States on Tuesday night as far south as Texas, Florida and Alabama, with another round of higher-latitude appearances forecast for Wednesday.

Ironically, the twin satellites of EscaPADE, short for Escape and Plasma Acceleration and Dynamics Explorers, are intended to study similar phenomena on Mars at the end of a 22-month voyage to the Red Planet.

(Reuters)



▲ A Blue Origin New Glenn rocket is fueled for launch with NASA's EscaPADE mission, carrying two satellites to orbit Mars, from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Florida, U.S.



# US government opens back up

THE U.S. government is due to lumber back to life on Thursday after the longest shutdown in U.S. history snarled air traffic, cut food assistance to low-income Americans and forced more than 1 million workers to go unpaid for more than a month.

But the deep political divisions that caused the 43-day shutdown in the first place remain unresolved.

The funding package contains few guardrails to restrain Republican President Donald Trump from withholding spending, in an administration that has regularly challenged Congress' constitutional authority over money. And it does not address the soon-to-expire health subsidies that led Senate Democrats to begin the shutdown in the first place.

The shutdown also exposed divides within the Democratic Party between its liberal base, which has demanded its leaders do whatever necessary to rein in Trump, and moderates who feel their options are limited so long as Republicans hold majorities in both chambers of Congress. Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer is facing calls to step down, even though he voted against the deal.

Federal workers, who had toiled without pay through the shutdown, will begin to receive back pay on Saturday with all payments due to be completed by Wednesday, the White House said. Agencies that fired employees during the shutdown should rescind the dismissals within five days, the federal workforce office said.

## AMERICANS BLAME REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS ALMOST EQUALLY

Neither party appears to have emerged as a clear winner. A Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Wednesday found that 50% of Americans

blamed Republicans for the shutdown while 47% blamed Democrats.

The return to normality could be short-lived, as the deal only funds the government until January 30, raising the prospect of another shutdown early next year.

The shutdown put Democrats in an unusual position, as Republicans have more frequently been the side that forced funding expirations over the last few decades.

This shutdown also stood out for what was largely absent: debate over the \$38 trillion national debt, which Congress for now leaves on a path to keep growing by about \$1.8 trillion per year.

Senate Democrats said the pain across the economy, including interruptions in federal benefits and missed paychecks for federal workers, was worth it to call attention to the coming surge in health insurance prices for some 24 million Americans.

"The healthcare of the American people is a fight worth having, and I'm proud that Democrats held together for this long to fight this battle," Representative Hank Johnson of Georgia told Reuters. "The American people are more aware of the high stakes in the fight that we're on ... They understand the precariousness of the situation, and that's why they want us to fight."

Democrats secured no guarantees on health subsidies, only a promise that the Republican-controlled Senate will hold a vote on the matter, with no assurances that it would pass or that the House would even vote on it.

But they argued that they managed to elevate the issue at a time when polls show Americans are concerned about the rising cost of living, and Republicans could face political blowback if they do not act to prevent insurance costs from spiking. The sub-



▲ American flags flutter in front of the U.S. Capitol more than a month into the continuing U.S. government shutdown in Washington, D.C., U.S.

sidies disproportionately benefit residents of Republican-controlled states.

Republicans, meanwhile, found themselves making arguments often voiced by Democrats during shutdowns: that the damage of the disruptions was not worth it.

"We ought to be legally prohibited from ever shutting down the government," Representative Brian Fitzpatrick, a Republican moderate, told Reuters. "This is just absolutely insane, insane that we're now using government shutdowns as leverage for policy. That can never happen, and it's a terrible precedent to set, obviously."

## FLIGHTS AND FOOD BENEFITS TO

### RESUME

The nation's air travel system has begun returning to normal, after thousands of flight cancellations brought on by high absentee rates among the nation's air traffic controllers.

And 42 million Americans will no longer have to worry whether the SNAP subsidies that help them pay for groceries will run out. A USDA spokesperson said most states would receive funds for full SNAP benefits within 24 hours of the government reopening.

(Reuters)

# As veil restrictions ease, political crackdown deepens

ON Tehran's bustling streets, signs of change are unmistakable. Women walk unveiled in jeans and sneakers, men and women linger together in cafés where Western music hums softly, and couples stroll hand-in-hand — subtle acts that chip away at the rigid social codes that have long defined the Islamic Republic.

But beneath the surface, a darker reality is unfolding. Iran's clerical rulers are intensifying a crackdown on political dissent to instill fear and prevent unrest, four activists inside Iran told Reuters.

Hundreds of journalists, lawyers, students, writers, and human rights advocates have been harassed, summoned, detained, or subjected to other punitive measures in recent months, according to rights groups and activists.

The authorities' strategy is calculated: relax visible restrictions to soothe public opinion amid Iran's growing economic isolation, while quietly intensifying a crackdown on political dissent, three Iranian officials and one former senior reformist official said.

Alex Vatanka, director of the Iran Program at the Middle East Institute, based in Washington D.C., said the strategy shows "tactical management" but the government's red lines remain firm.

dissent," Vatanka said.

Iran's clerical rulers are facing one of their gravest tests since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Conflict with Israel left Iranian military and nuclear sites badly damaged in June, and has dismantled its regional network of allies



▲ An Iranian woman walks past an anti-U.S. billboard on a street in Tehran, Iran.

- from Hamas in Gaza to Lebanon's Hezbollah and militias in Iraq.

At home, the economy is reeling from the collapse of the rial currency, soaring inflation, and crippling energy and water shortages.

"Iran is in uncharted territory, and the regime's current approach is less a coherent strategy than a series of short-term experiments aimed at surviving a volatile moment."

Iran's foreign ministry and justice ministry did not respond to requests for comment for this story.

The hijab, a flashpoint during the protests

sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini — a young woman detained in 2022 for allegedly violating the mandatory hijab law — is now being enforced selectively.

Fearing a resurgence of nationwide protests amid growing public frustration, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has refused to implement a hardline-backed "Hijab and Chastity" law, approved late last year.

Online, a stream of glossy videos paints a picture of a vibrant, welcoming Iran. Foreign travel influencers — some invited and sponsored by the government — post wide-eyed reactions to ancient ruins, bustling bazaars, and lavish meals. Often they portray

the country as misunderstood and unfairly maligned.

Their content, shared with millions of followers, is part of the clerical establishment's effort to rebrand Iran as a safe and alluring destination.

Meanwhile, viral video clips from recent street concerts show young Iranians dancing unveiled, singing along to pop ballads in controlled venues — scenes unimaginable two years ago.

## EASING SOCIAL FREEDOMS TO MASK CLAMPDOWN

But critics say these spectacles are carefully choreographed, designed to project openness while masking a deepening crackdown.

Iran's execution rate has surged to levels not seen since 1989. As of October 21, authorities had executed at least 1,176 people in 2025 — an average of four per day — according to the UN Human Rights Office.

"Pressure is mounting — from threats to our families, to arrests of activists, students and journalists. They want to crush dissent," said one activist, jailed in 2019 during protests over fuel price hikes that quickly turned political, with protesters demanding "regime change".

All of the activists spoke on condition of anonymity, from fear of reprisals.

Iran's ruling elite are caught between discontent at home and stalled nuclear talks with Washington to end a decades-long dispute — a combination that has left the country politically and financially isolated.

(Reuters)





By Siphesihle Dlamini  
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THIS weekend in Eswatini offers a quiet entertainment scene, with only a handful of events taking place across the Kingdom.

While big shows are scarce, Eswatini Daily News has curated a selection of the few available happenings to help you make the most of your weekend and enjoy some local fun.

#### ►► ORYX WEEKENDER

**When:** Weekend

**Where:** Oryx Lounge

**Fee:** Vary

The weekend spirit finds its perfect home at Oryx Lounge, Eswatini's distinguished social hub located at the Esushini Gables Shopping Centre. Known for curating refined experiences that blend relaxation, entertainment, and exclusivity, the establishment has announced an exciting "Weekender" lineup set to run from Friday, 14 November, through Sunday, 16 November. The series starts on Friday. Oryx Lounge is set to transition seamlessly into "Weekenders," a two-day experience designed to keep the energy flowing from dusk till dawn. Friday's highlight is a special buy-one-get-one-free cocktail promotion between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., encouraging guests to unwind and embrace the spirit of good company. The mood heightens further on Saturday with bottomless mimosas offered from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at E250 per person, a luxurious way to spend the late morning hours surrounded by upbeat music and a relaxed crowd. To complete the perfect stretch of festivities, Sunday brings "Sunset Sundays," an elegant wind-down that captures the serenity of Eswatini's late afternoon skies. Running from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m., the event features an enticing special of E200 per pack on selected ciders, including Bernini Classic and Blush. The lounge's ambience, accompanied by a trio of talented DJs, The Bishop, Selby, and Katz, ensures that guests enjoy smooth transitions between chill, groove, and dancefloor energy.

#### ►► FRIDAY AFTERWORK GROOVE

**When:** Friday

**Where:** IF's Lounge, Mbabane

**Fee:** Free

The weekend begins with a burst of rhythm and flavour as IF's Lounge Manzini presents the highly anticipated "Friday Afterwork Groove with Mlakes" this Friday, November 14, 2025, promising a fusion of smooth sounds, good company, and an atmosphere that defines Eswatini's urban nightlife. The event will feature an electric lineup including Skeezy and Acoustic Soul, each bringing their own blend of soundscapes designed to ignite the Manzini crowd. The party kicks off at 6 pm at the Carson Building in Moneni and runs late into the night, with free entrance as a generous invitation to all groove enthusiasts. Known for creating an ambience where class meets comfort, IF's Lounge continues to serve as the heartbeat of Swazi nightlife.

#### ►► FRIDAY GROOVE

**When:** Friday

**Where:** IF's Lounge, Manzini

**Fee:** Free

Eswatini's capital will sway to the rhythm of fine tunes and fresh vibes as IF's Lounge Mbabane hosts the elegant "Friday Afterwork Groove" this Friday, November 14, 2025. The night is tailored

for professionals, creatives, and fun-lovers looking to unwind after a productive week in style. Headlining the night is Tidal Deep, who Mistosoul, Yamkela, and Obsession will join. The venue, located at the MVA Building, will open its doors from 5 pm till late, offering free entry for all guests who come dressed in smart casual. The event is expected to transform the usually calm city atmosphere into a playground of laughter, dance, and soulful music.

#### ►► HHOHHO OPEN MIC POETRY SESSION

**When:** Saturday

**Where:** Coronation Park

**Fee:** Free

Majaha Nkonyane, an acclaimed poet from Eswatini, is poised to lead the upcoming Hhohho Open Mic Poetry Session. Organised by the Eswatini National Poetry Session, this gathering will take place on November 15, 2025, at noon in Coronation Park, Mbabane, with free entry welcoming all poetry enthusiasts

and curious newcomers alike. Nkonyane's journey with poetry is deeply personal and transformative. Reflecting on his relationship with the art form, he shared, "Poetry has been a big part of my life for ages now. I found identity, comfort, and passion in poetry."

This intimate connection has shaped his artistic voice and life path, though he admits that the intensity of his initial passion has waned over time. "Over time, the fire, passion, and drive have undoubtedly died down," he confessed. Despite moments of doubt and the temptation to abandon poetry, Nkonyane's commitment to his craft remains steadfast. "On many occasions, I've thought of quitting, but how do you quit your life?" he pondered. The practical demands of life led him to prioritise survival, choosing a job over his passion. Nkonyane expressed a poignant concern about the current state of poetry in Eswatini. He observed that the poetry scene has grown quieter, a trend that has been difficult for him to witness. However, he

finds hope and motivation in the efforts of young poets striving to revive the art form. "Seeing the poetry space grow quieter in Eswatini has been painful, but seeing young poets trying to revive the art is inspiring," he noted.

#### ►► SATURDAY NIGHTS

**When:** Saturday

**Where:** IF's Lounge, Manzini

**Fee:** Free

Prepare to be transported to a realm of soulful beats and electrifying energy as Snyder takes centre stage at the upcoming Saturday event. This event will feature a lineup of talented artists including DJ Black, Mistosoul, Yamkela and Acoustic Soul. Together, they will create a musical experience that will captivate and soul-soothe the audience in attendance. Entry is free into the event. Guests are encouraged to dress in smart casual attire, setting the tone for a night of sophistication and style. Grab your friends and get ready to groove the night away on Saturday Nights.



# Quiet weekend ahead



# Oncemore Six to headline Dominion Celebration

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

SOUTH African gospel music is set to shine brightly in Mbabane as the renowned gospel artist Oncemore Six prepares to headline the highly anticipated Dominion Celebration at Worship Centre.

This event, scheduled from December 10 to 14, 2025, promises to be a powerful gathering of faith, music, and spiritual upliftment. The Dominion Celebration, hosted by Apostle Justice Dlamini and Pastor Zandile, will feature an impressive lineup of speakers and artists from South Africa and abroad. Among the distinguished speakers are Dr Peter Bonadie from the United States, alongside prominent South African spiritual leaders such as Bishop Malomane, Apostle Balwin, Prophet Blessing, Apostle Divine, and Apostle QT. Their presence is expected to bring diverse and enriching messages to attendees, fostering a deep spiritual experience throughout the event.

Musical performances will be a highlight of the celebration, with Oncemore Six leading the charge. Known for his powerful vocals and heartfelt worship leading, Oncemore Six has carved a niche in the gospel music scene. His journey began in South Africa, where his early exposure to music through his mother and church upbringing laid a strong foundation for his career. Over the years, he has released several impactful songs, including fan favourites like “Ngeke Ng’suke Kuwe” and “Here on Our Knees,” which have resonated deeply with gospel audiences.



▲ Oncemore Six.

Joining Oncemore Six on stage will be other talented artists such as Sphiwo Ndoni and Phetsile Masilela, ensuring a rich and varied musical experience. The event schedule is designed to accommodate busy worshippers, with sessions running from 6 pm on Wednesday through Thursday and a special Sunday morning service starting at 10 am.

The Dominion Celebration at Worship Centre is more than just a music festival; it is a spiritual revival aimed at bringing communities together in worship and faith. The combination of international and local speakers alongside gifted musicians creates a unique platform for worship, teaching, and fellowship.

## Almost 100,000 views for Young Zesh’s ‘Senibeketele’

ESWATINI music star Young Zesh is making waves in the Eswatini music scene with his latest single, ‘Senibeketele’ has hit 97,000 views in 3 months on YouTube.

The visuals elevate the song’s already soaring popularity. Since its release, ‘Senibeketele’ audio has quickly gained traction, amassing over 40,000 views on YouTube, showcasing the growing influence of Young Zesh in the local music industry. This impressive reception marks a significant milestone for the artist, who is also debuting the single under his newly registered label, Mabona Abulawe Records.

‘Senibeketele’ is more than just another song in Young Zesh’s growing discography; it is a heartfelt tribute to the unwavering support he has received from his fans throughout his musical journey. In an exclusive interview, Young Zesh shared the inspiration behind the song, highlighting the importance of his loyal fanbase.

“This song was inspired by my lovely fans who have been there for me since day one,” he expressed, emphasising how their encouragement has fueled his passion for music. The track aims to convey love and appreciation, serving as a heartfelt acknowledgement of the crucial role his fans play in his life and career.

The creative process behind ‘Senibeketele’ was nothing short of electrifying. Young Zesh collaborated closely with renowned producers DJ Citie and Jimmy Boy SD, creating an environment filled with creativity and energy. “DJ Citie and I created the song together. He was making the beat while I was writing the hook. It’s an African Trap song, produced by DJ Citie NTM. S/O to him for the wonderful work,” he said, reflecting on the synergy that fueled the creation of the track.

Young Zesh is actively encouraging his fans to engage with the song. “I would love to plead with everyone to share the link, stream, like, and comment,” he urged, recognising the power of social media and digital platforms in amplifying his music and connecting with listeners.



◀ Young Zesh.



▲ Uncle Waffles.

## Uncle Waffles set for Brisbane

GLOBAL sensation and Eswatini-born DJ, Uncle Waffles, continues to solidify her place among the world’s most electrifying musical exports with the next leg of her “I’m In Dis Ho” World Tour, this time taking her irresistible energy to Australia.

The acclaimed performer, known for her dynamic stage presence and genre-bending amapiano sets, announced a string of highly anticipated shows that will take her to major Australian cities this November. The Australia leg of the tour will see her perform in Brisbane, Perth, Sydney, and Melbourne, with several venues already reporting limited ticket availability or complete sell-outs. Each stop promises to deliver the signature Uncle Waffles experience, a fusion of high-tempo beats, expressive choreography, and vibrant fashion that has captivated audiences across continents.

From the moment the announcement was made, excitement rippled through social media, with fans in Australia celebrating the long-awaited arrival of one of Africa’s most internationally recognised DJs. The tour’s creative concept, tied to her bold “I’m In Dis Ho” branding, reflects her unapologetic confidence and her continued celebration of African musical identity on the global stage.

### Landscape

Uncle Waffles’ journey from Eswatini’s vibrant cultural landscape to the world’s biggest stages has been nothing short of extraordinary. Rising to fame through her viral DJ performances, she quickly transcended the status of internet sensation to become a global ambassador for Amapiano, a genre that has taken the world by storm. Her tours have brought the uniquely South African sound, infused with her personal artistry, to audiences across Europe, North America, and Asia, helping to cement Africa’s influence in the global music scene.

The Australian edition of the tour kicks off on November 13, 2025, at Eclipse, Brisbane, before moving to Metro City in Perth the following night. The excitement continues at Bella Live and Glass Island in Sydney, with the latter already marked as sold out, before culminating in a grand finale at Ms Collins in Melbourne. These venues, known for their vibrant nightlife and cutting-edge sound systems, provide the perfect stage for Uncle Waffles’ high-energy sets.



# Shebeshxt remains locked up



▲ Lehlogonolo Chauke, popularly known as Shebeshxt.

LEHLOGONOLO Chauke, popularly known as Shebeshxt, could lose thousands of rands in performance bookings this coming festive season if his court case at the Polokwane High Court drags beyond December.

This comes after his case, in which he faces two counts of attempted murder, was postponed on Thursday to November 21. May lose entire December gigs

The troublesome Lekompo musician was remanded in custody for another week until his next court appearance. This is pending further investigation and profiling. Should he fail to get bail, it will spell financial loss for him after the confirmation of hectic back-to-back bookings that start from the end of November throughout the entire month of December. The 30-year-old controversial artist is facing two counts of attempted murder following his arrest on Wednesday morning during an intelligence-driven police operation in the upmarket suburb of Bendor, outside Polokwane.

Shebeshxt was in the company of his legal representative Lot Ramusi during his arrest. He was taken into custody after detectives obtained a warrant of arrest linked to a case registered at Westernburg SAPS. Ramusi said his client faces multiple attempted murder charges that are yet to be fully investigated.

"We were contacted about two weeks ago that he was wanted by police. He even

attempted to hand himself over, but they refused to arrest him. Until his arrest on Wednesday," said Ramusi.

**Attempted murder incident**

Police spokesperson Colonel Malesela Ledwaba confirmed the arrest on Wednesday morning. He said it relates to a shooting incident that took place on October 19. The incident happened along Witklip Street in Ladanna, outside Polokwane.

"The suspect allegedly got into a fight with another driver and fired multiple shots at another vehicle, injuring a 34-year-old man who was later taken to hospital with serious injuries," Ledwaba said.

The case was initially opened at Westernburg SAPS. But it was later transferred to the Provincial Investigation Unit for further probing. Police secured a warrant on Tuesday and executed it the following day. They also seized two vehicles belonging to the suspect for forensic analysis. Limpopo Police Commissioner Lieutenant-General Thembi Hadebe commended the investigation and operational teams for their swift action.

"We are addressing this matter with utmost seriousness. And a dedicated team has been appointed to investigate every aspect of the case," said Hadebe.

**"The South African Police Service reiterates that no one is above the law, regardless of their social standing."**  
(Sunday World)



## Brenda Ngxoli to play Brenda Fassie in new docu series

SABC1 has confirmed Brenda Ngxoli as the lead in "Vulindlela", a new four-part documentary series based on the life and legacy of Brenda Fassie.

The award-winning actress will take on the role of the "Weekend Special" hitmaker, telling the story of her rise to fame, personal challenges, and ultimate redemption through her iconic album "Vulindlela".

Ngxoli, whose career spans over two decades, is known for her versatility on both television and film. Many will remember her from "Home Affairs", where she made her television debut in 2005 and later from hit shows such as "Rockville" and "The Queen", to name a few. Her ability to embody complex characters has made her one of South Africa's most respected performers, and fans are excited about her portrayal of Fassie.

Taking on the role of Brenda Fassie marks a major moment in Ngxoli's career. Fassie's story remains one of the most captivating in South African music history, a tale of talent, turbulence, as well as triumph. The documentary will highlight her extraordinary journey from humble beginnings to becoming one of the country's most beloved and controversial stars. (IOL)

## Adele makes bold acting debut

AFTER taking a break from her singing career, Grammy Award-winning British singer Adele is ready to make her mark in acting.

According to online reports, the 37-year-old "Rolling in the Deep" hitmaker will star in the film "Cry to Heaven", an adaptation based on Anne Rice's famous 1982 novel.

Ever since she wrapped up her "Weekends with Adele" concert series in 2024, she has been out of the spotlight.

She announced that her intention to take "a big break" is to explore "other creative things just for a little while."

With her biggest album, "30", released in 2021 and her concert series behind her, many fans are excited to see what she will bring to the big screen. "Cry to Heaven", directed and written by renowned designer and filmmaker

Tom Ford, is set in the artistic world of 18th-century Italy.

It tells the story of a Venetian noble whose life becomes intertwined with a castrated opera singer. The movie features an all-star cast, including Thandi Newton, Nicholas Hoult, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Colin Firth and Paul Bettany, making it one of Hollywood's most anticipated projects.

Filming is expected to start in mid-January in London and Rome, and the movie is set to release in the last quarter of 2026.

Ford is not new to the film scene. After a nine-year break from directing, he is making a grand return with his psychological thriller "Nocturnal Animals", which earned him two BAFTA nominations. "I loved making the two films that I made. That was the most fun I've ever had in my entire life," said Ford in an online interview.

Ford sold his fashion brand to Estée Lauder for £2.4 billion (over R53bn) in 2022.

At the time, he said, "I will say goodbye to fashion to focus entirely on filmmaking for the next twenty years."

"Cry to Heaven" will be Ford's third film following his debut, "A Single Man" in 2009, and "Nocturnal Animals" in 2016.

(Bang Showbiz)

## Nadia Nakai to release 'Really' featuring Nasty C

RAPPER and reality TV star Nadia Nakai is preparing to release her new single "Really", featuring Nasty C, a track that addresses the constant criticism and gossip surrounding her.

The song, set to drop on Friday, November 21, is positioned as her musical response to those who have had plenty to say about her personal life and public image.

Nakai has been at the centre of online conversations for months, with fans and critics often scrutinising her lifestyle, relationships and image.

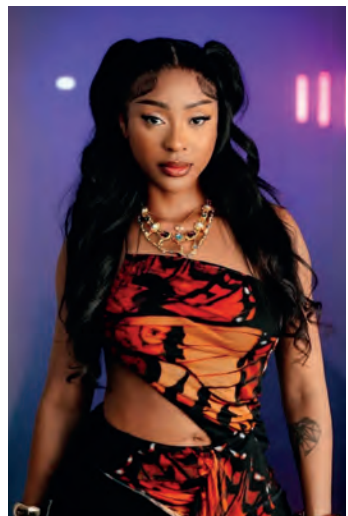
She has faced judgment for her interactions with married men, her revealing social media posts and her outspoken personality on the reality show "Young, Famous & African".

Recently, a moment from her own show, "Beyond Bragga", sparked controversy.

During a prank call segment, Nakai phoned producer Zakes Bantwini asking for money, which some viewers felt was inappropriate and disrespectful toward his wife, Nandi Madida.

The incident quickly spread across social media, drawing mixed reactions and reigniting debates about Nakai's behaviour.

Another incident that fueled



▲ Rapper and reality TV star Nadia Nakai.

speculation was her being spotted cosy with Cassper Nyovest in a club. This added to the ongoing public criticism of Nakai's conduct and relationships within the entertainment industry. Her fashion choices and social media presence have also made her a frequent target for negative commentary.

Many have accused her of "seeking attention" by posting revealing photos, with some users labelling her as "cheap" or claiming that she has "lost it".

Despite the criticism, Nakai has remained unapologetic about her presentation.

▲ Grammy Award-winning British singer Adele is ready to make her mark in acting.



**YOUR gut isn't just about digestion. It's a powerful messenger. Here's what it's trying to tell you.**

Our gut speaks to us more than we realize. Whether it's a bout of bloating after a heavy meal or a persistent cramp that just won't fade, those sensations are signals.

According to Dr. Salhab, a board certified gastroenterologist known online as @thestomachdoc, our digestive system is constantly communicating with us, reflecting not only what we eat but also how we live, manage stress, and even feel emotions.

Understanding these signals can help us distinguish between minor discomfort and the need for medical attention.

#### Understanding gut signals

Your digestive system is full of feedback mechanisms, constantly sending you clues about what's happening inside. Learning to recognize those signals and knowing when to take them seriously can help you support your health before problems grow.

#### How your gut "speaks up"

"The gut most commonly 'speaks up' with bloating, excess gas, abdominal cramping, changes in bowel habits (constipation, diarrhea, or new urgency), reflux or heartburn, early fullness, nausea, or a sense that your stomach is 'off,'" says Dr. Salhab.

Many of these temporary flares are harmless and often linked to short-term triggersTrusted Source, such as:

- ▶ stress
- ▶ infections
- ▶ menstrual cycles
- ▶ travel
- ▶ medications
- ▶ eating too many ultra-processed foods

Listening to your gut means paying attention to the timing and context of these sensations. Notice what feels typical for you and what feels new or unusual.

Small changes in how your body responds can provide valuable insights into how stress, diet, and daily habits may be impacting your digestive health.

#### What your "gut feeling" really means

According to Dr. Salhab, what people often describe as a gut instinct has deep biological roots. "A 'gut feeling' reflects real biology: the enteric nervous system (your gut's built-in nerve network), the vagus nerve, immune signals, hormones, and the microbiome are constantly messaging the brain in a two-way conversation," he explains. This communication helps explain why stress can lead to nausea or why anxiety may cause your stomach to twist in knots.

"While not every emotion starts in the gut, a meaningful portion of how we perceive stress, calm, and even motivation is influenced by gut-to-brain signals and the metabolites produced by our microbes" says Dr. Salhab. In other words, the gut constantly sends chemical messages to the brain, and these signals can affect your mood, stress levels, and overall digestion.

Recognizing this connection can help you respond to symptoms with more awareness. If your stomach tends to tighten during stressful periods, it's not all in your head: it's your gut and brain in active conversation.

#### Symptoms to watch

Gut symptoms can vary from mildly



# What your gut is trying to tell you

annoying to life-altering. Understanding which ones to keep an eye on helps you know when to make lifestyle changes and when to seek medical advice.

#### Subtle signs that shouldn't be ignored

Some gut symptoms are easy to dismiss but can indicate deeper issues.

"People often downplay chronic bloating, iron-deficiency anemia, frequent 'heartburn' that persists despite antacids, unintentional weight changes, new lactose or fructose intolerance, and stools that alternate between constipation and diarrhea," says Dr. Salhab.

He notes that even symptoms outside the digestive system can point toward gastrointestinal problems. "Recurrent mouth ulcers, joint pains, skin rashes, or eye irritation alongside gut symptoms can also point toward inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)," he adds.

One more clue? "A sudden need to locate bathrooms everywhere you go. That change in confidence can be diagnostic."

#### When discomfort becomes something more

It's typical to experience occasional digestive upset after a heavy meal or a night of low quality sleep. However, persistent or unpredictable symptoms can signal a more complex condition.

"Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) involves recurrent abdominal pain related to bowel

movements with a pattern of constipation, diarrhea, or both, and tends to wax and wane without causing tissue damage," Dr. Salhab explains.

In contrast, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is characterized by visible inflammation in the digestive tract. "Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis can cause bleeding, weight loss, fever, and lab abnormalities; they require medical therapy," he says.

Food intolerances are another common culprit. "Symptoms improve with targeted dietary changes, though celiac disease is an immune condition and needs formal testing before any diet trial," he emphasizes.

Paying attention to patterns, triggers, and persistence can help you and your doctor determine what's behind your symptoms.

#### Daily habits and gut health

What you do every day has a significant impact on your gut health. From the foods you eat to how you sleep, move, and manage stress, your habits determine how well your digestive system functions.

#### What can quietly harm your gut

Many of the habits that wear down gut health develop slowly.

"Chronically low fiber intake, frequent ultra-processed foods, excess alcohol, smoking or vaping, poorly managed stress, short or irregular sleep, sedentary time, dehydration, and frequent unnecessary NSAIDs (like ibuprofen) can all wear down

gut resilience," says Dr. Salhab.

He also points out that overuse of antibiotics or extreme restrictive diets can reduce microbial diversity, which plays a vital role in keeping the digestive system balanced. Over time, these factors can make the gut more reactive and less adaptable to everyday stressors.

#### Habits that support a stronger gut

It's important to remember that everyday choices can make a big difference. According to Dr. Salhab, these three core habits can help strengthen gut resilience over time:

▶ **Hydrate and simplify.** Drink enough water, limit alcohol, and focus on balanced meals that include protein, color, and fermentable fibers rather than chasing quick fixes.

▶ **Prioritize fiber and plant diversity.** Aim for a wide range of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, and whole grains each week to feed beneficial microbes and support digestion.

▶ **Be consistent with movement, sleep, and stress care.** Regular physical activity, seven to nine hours of sleep per night, and stress-management practices like breathwork or mindfulness help regulate gut-brain signaling.

These small, consistent habits quietly train your gut over time, creating a foundation that outperforms any supplement or short-term cleanse.





### The gut-brain connection

Your gut and brain are in constant conversation, influencing everything from mood and energy to digestion itself. Understanding this relationship can help you care for both more effectively.

### How your gut affects your mind and energy

“The vagus nerve carries real-time status updates, gut bacteria produce metabolites (like short-chain fatty acids) that can influence inflammation and neurotransmitter pathways, and stress hormones loop back to affect motility and sensitivity,” Dr. Salhab explains. “Think of the gut and brain as teammates on a live intercom.”

When this system is balanced, people often experience steady energy, fewer “brain fog” days, and a calmer stomach. “When it is dysregulated, we see more pain, bloating, urgency, and mood lability,” he adds.

This connection is a reminder that caring for your digestive system also supports emotional balance and mental clarity.

### The role of probiotics and fermented foods

Dr. Salhab encourages a “food-first” approach when it comes to probiotics. “I generally start food-first with fermented options (such as yogurt with live cultures, kefir, or fermented vegetables) and prebiotic fibers (like oats, onions, garlic, bananas, legumes),” he says.

“Probiotic supplements can help select conditions, but benefits are strain-specific and not one-size-fits-all.” He recommends trying one change at a time for four to eight weeks and noting how your body responds.

People who are immunocompromised, pregnant, or have significant GI disease should talk to their doctor before starting any supplement routine.

### When to see a gut specialist

Even with healthy habits, there are times when your gut needs professional attention. Recognizing when to call a specialist can help you prevent complications and get peace of mind.

### Knowing when to call your gastroenterologist

“There’s a difference between an occasional flare and a sign that something more serious is happening,” says Dr. Salhab. “You should see a gastroenterologist if you notice any red flags:”

- ▶ bleeding
- ▶ black stools
- ▶ unexplained weight loss
- ▶ persistent vomiting
- ▶ anemia
- ▶ fever
- ▶ nighttime symptoms
- ▶ trouble swallowing

He adds that it’s also worth scheduling a visit if:

- ▶ symptoms persist for several weeks despite basic changes
- ▶ over-the-counter remedies stop working
- ▶ you have a strong family history of gastrointestinal disease
- ▶ new symptoms appear after age 40

Noticing these patterns can help you catch treatable conditions early and support long-term gut health. **Healthline**

## CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE:

# Men need more exercise than women

**MEN may need nearly twice as much weekly exercise as women to achieve the same heart health benefits.**

A study of over 85,000 people found that females achieved greater reductions in cardiovascular disease risk and mortality with less physical activity.

The findings highlight a persistent “gender gap” in both exercise habits and outcomes, suggesting a need for more targeted public health guidelines.

Men may need about twice as much weekly physical activity as women to achieve comparable cardiovascular benefits, a new study suggests.

The research, published October 27 in *Nature Cardiovascular Research* Trusted Source, highlights notable sex-based differences in how exercise affects heart health — and points to a possible need for more tailored public health strategies that account for those differences.

Guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Heart Association (AHA) recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity Trusted Source each week. Females who met or exceeded that threshold had a greater reduction in risk compared to males who did the same.

However, the study also identified a “gender gap” in both adherence to exercise guidelines and overall fitness capacity. In other words, even though females appear to gain greater heart health benefits from exercise, they’re less likely than males to meet the recommended activity levels; males also generally have higher physical fitness. The authors say their work is essential for tailoring physical activity guidelines and closing this gap.

Other experts say that while the findings are significant, the goal for now is to continue focusing on the majority of people, both males and females, who do not meet minimum physical activity recommendations.

According to the CDC Trusted Source, fewer than half of U.S. adults (47%) meet these minimum guidelines.

“This study finds consistent results with many previous studies and meta-analyses where physical activity has cardiovascular benefits for both sexes, but the estimated cardiovascular risk reduction from meeting moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity recommendations is a bit higher in women compared to men,” said Bethany Barone Gibbs, PhD, professor and chair of epidemiology and biostatistics at West Virginia University School of Public Health and volunteer expert for the American Heart Association (AHA). Gibbs wasn’t involved in the study.

“Though the modeled gradient of benefit is steeper for women than men, I think the more important message is the overall benefit from being active that both sexes achieve,” she told Healthline.

### Men need twice as much exercise as women

The large observational study utilized



data from over 85,000 participants in the UK Biobank to investigate the impact of physical activity on cardiovascular health in both males and females.

Specifically, the researchers investigated the impact of exercise on the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD), also known as atherosclerosis. This type of cardiovascular disease involves a hardening of the arteries due to plaque buildup. The goal was to determine whether the authors’ “one-size-fits-all” exercise recommendations adequately reflect sex-based differences.

Most participants — about 80,000 — did not have CHD, while a smaller subgroup of roughly 5,000 did. Among participants without CHD, researchers assessed the risk of developing the disease; among those with existing CHD, they examined mortality. Participants provided activity data via wrist-worn fitness trackers.

Females who hit the minimum physical activity recommendations had a 22% lower risk of CHD compared to just 17% for males. There was also a dose-response relationship: more additional exercise yielded greater benefits, but the gap between females and males widened.

At about 250 minutes of weekly physical activity, females saw a 30% reduction in CHD risk. To achieve a similar benefit, males needed to log more than twice as much exercise — 530 minutes per week.

In the subgroup with CHD, physical activity was linked to lower overall risk of death, but discrepancies in mortality risk also varied by sex.

Active females had a 70% lower risk of death, compared with just a 19% reduction in males.

To achieve the same mortality reduction, males required 1.7 times more exercise than females, approximately 85 minutes per week, compared with 51 minutes for females.

It isn’t entirely clear why females appear to gain stronger heart-health benefits from physical activity than males, but the authors suggest several possible explanations. One involves estrogen, which circulates at much higher levels in females.

This hormone has a wide range of effects on the cardiovascular system and

is generally considered protective for the heart. Trusted Source The dip in estrogen that females experience during menopause is a contributing factor to the increased risk of heart disease during that time.

Setting sex-based differences aside, the study also underscores the simple fact that too many people are not getting even the minimum exercise every week. Those without CHD who met physical activity guidelines were in line with the U.S. average, about 48%. However, less than one-third of people with CHD hit this threshold.

Still, current research indicates that males, on average, engage in more exercise than females. Globally, the number of females who do not get enough physical activity is approximately 5% higher than that of males.

In the United States, the difference between males and females meeting physical activity guidelines is approximately 43% and 33%, respectively, according to the .

### Addressing the physical activity ‘gender gap’

“Until we get more concrete evidence, best practice is to stick clinically with the evidence-based guidelines that recommend at least 150 minutes per week of aerobic activity for health benefits and 300 minutes [or more] for even greater benefits for both sexes,” said Barone Gibbs.

Currently the AHA does not make any specific recommendations for physical activity based on sex.

Denice Ichinoe, DO, an assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, said that while her concern is also reaching those who simply don’t exercise enough, women may face barriers to achieving their physical activity goals. Ichinoe wasn’t involved in the study.

“There are a lot of key contributing factors to it. A lot of times, it’s either time constraints with work or even caregiving responsibilities, which fall into the traditional social norms and cultural aspects of women,” she told Healthline. **Healthline**



# Around the world in pictures



▲ A flock of birds flies past a tree on a smoggy morning amid ongoing air pollution in New Delhi, India.



▲ An Indigenous demonstrator is held by a staff member as protesters forced their way into the venue hosting the UN Climate Change Conference (COP30), in Belem, Brazil.



▲ People wait for the start of the funeral service for world-renowned conservationist Jane Goodall at Washington National Cathedral, in Washington.t



▲ She Zhijiang, 43, a Chinese national gambling kingpin who was arrested by Thai police in August 2022 on an international warrant and an Interpol red notice requested by Beijing of having run illegal online gambling operations, is escorted by police ahead of being extradited to China, at Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport, in Samut Prakan, Thailand.



▲ Ukrainian servicemen help transfer their wounded comrade from an unmanned ground vehicle to a pickup truck near the frontline city of Kostiantynivka, in Donetsk region, Ukraine.



AS Bafana Bafana continue their build-up to the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Morocco later this year, one can't shake the feeling that the South African Football Association (SAFA) has missed a trick by not securing stronger opposition for Hugo Broos' men.

This is not a dig at Zambia, far from it because Chipolopolo have also qualified for the continental showpiece and remain a proud footballing nation with a rich history. However, where South Africa is right now, and where they want to go, it's fair to expect better.

The reality is that Bafana need to be pushed to their limits before heading into a tournament that will test every facet of their game. Matches like the one against Zambia may offer Broos a chance to experiment with combinations, but they do little to reveal the true measure of this team's readiness for the challenges ahead.

This is a pivotal time for Bafana, with the AFCON is around the corner, and next year's FIFA World Cup in North America. Every fixture between now and then should be a stepping stone toward becoming more competitive on the global stage.

Playing teams where Bafana are clear favourites does not serve that purpose. It creates a false sense of security and a comfort zone that might flatter to deceive at a later stage. There's a simple truth in the saying, "iron sharpens iron." Bafana need tougher, more demanding opponents, whether from Africa, Europe, or South America to truly



# SAFA missed opportunity to sharpen Bafana for AFCON

gauge their progress from a physical, mental, and tactical point of view.

Only through such battles can the players learn to cope under real pressure and refine their mental resilience needed to compete with the best in the world. Looking at Bafana's AFCON Group B opponents, it's clear that others are taking a more ambitious approach.

Angola have arranged a friendly against world champions Argentina. Egypt will face Uzbekistan, a rising force who have qualified for their first global showpiece. Even Zimbabwe are set to play Algeria as part of their preparations.

Meanwhile, other top African nations such as Tunisia are using the FIFA window to test themselves against Jordan and Brazil. These are the kinds of fixtures that reveal strengths, expose flaws, and that is exactly what preparations are meant to do.

Broos deserves credit for the transformation he has overseen since taking charge. He has instilled structure, belief, and a winning mentality. For that momentum to continue, SAFA must play its part too by securing quality opposition.

Bafana have been through the fire and emerged stronger. Now it's time to see how far that progress truly extends. To conquer in Morocco and compete at the World Cup that will be played across the United States, Canada and Mexico in 2026, the 1996 AFCON champions must first dare to test themselves against the very best.

(Supersport)

# Arsenal's Saka dismisses early title talk

ARSENAL must shut out external noise and stay grounded, with the Londoners leading the Premier League title race by four points after 11 games, forward Bukayo Saka said on Thursday ahead of England's World Cup qualifier against Serbia at Wembley.

Arsenal have 26 points after eight wins and two draws, having been held 2-2 at Sunderland last weekend, with Manchester City closing the gap following a 3-0 home win over Liverpool.

Mikel Arteta's team have conceded only five league goals so far but Saka said they were not getting ahead of themselves.

"We just have to win every game, that's the mentality we go into the game (with) and see where it leaves us," he told talkSPORT in an interview published on Thursday.

"We cannot get carried away with what people are saying, because one day they say something and the next day they say something else.

"People's opinion about us changes like the weather. The most important thing is our dressing room, and the foundation and the belief we have in ourselves."

Arsenal have come second for three straight seasons under Arteta, falling short in 2022-23 and 2023-24 before finishing further behind last year, a sequence of misses that has left them still chasing their first league crown in two decades.

They next host fifth-placed arch-rivals Tottenham Hotspur on 23 November following the interna-



▲ Bukayo Saka

tional break.

Saka is preparing for World Cup qualifiers against Serbia and away to Albania on Sunday, with England having become the first European

nation to seal a spot at next year's finals in North America with six consecutive wins in their group.

(Supersport)

# Van Der Merwe secures Sunshine Tour card with third Big Easy victory

JACQUES Van Der Merwe secured his Sunshine Tour card for this season in spectacular fashion after he claimed a come-from-behind victory in the ninth Betway Big Easy Tour event of the season, held at Krugersdorp Golf Club.

Thursday's triumph was the third of the current campaign for Van der Merwe and thus, as Tour regulations stipulate, a direct pathway to the main Tour of which the Betway Big Easy Tour is the feeder.

Van Der Merwe started the final round at nine-under-par and a stroke off the pace set by Andre Van Zyl, setting up what

would be a sizzling final round.

With Van Zyl struggling to maintain his momentum and eventually signing for an even-par round, Van Der Merwe seized the moment with a brilliant 69 to total 12-under-par 204.

"Life happens quickly, hey", Van Der Merwe mused, reflecting on his hat-trick of victories this season.

"I was thinking about it four holes ago; walking on the fairway and thinking how quickly things can happen, especially in this sport. If you work hard and forget about tournaments and results, things can happen on a blink of an eye.

(Supersport)



▲ Jacques Van Der Merwe.



# McIlroy two shots off the lead as Kim top after round one in Dubai

RORY McIlroy took a big first step towards capturing a seventh Order of Merit crown when he opened with a six-under par 66 round on Thursday in the season-ending DP World Tour Championship.

McIlroy was two shots behind American Michael Kim, who was bogey-free in a round of 64, and one behind the red-hot Tommy Fleetwood of England, who did not drop a shot as well in his round of 65.

More importantly, the two players who still have a mathematical chance of beating McIlroy — England's Marco Penge and Tyrrell Hatton — did not have the best starts and were lagging far behind.

Penge, playing alongside McIlroy, opened with a two-over 74 to be tied 46th in the 52-man field, while Hatton finished on 70 and was tied 22nd.

"Got off to the perfect start, making three birdies in a row," said McIlroy, who was fast off the blocks in the first three holes.

"I felt like that was probably one of the best approach play rounds I've had in a long time.

"My wedge play felt really sharp. Had a lot of good iron shots. I don't want to sound like I'm that disappointed, but I feel like I left a few out there. I missed a couple of short ones," said the world No 2.

McIlroy is playing the championship for the 15th year, and showed his comfort on the Earth course of Jumeirah Golf Estates where he has won three times, including last year.



▲ Rory McIlroy.

"Overall, it was a really solid start on a golf course that I'm very comfortable on and historically, I've played very well on," said the Northern Irishman.

## 'IN THE THICK OF THINGS'

With his closest challenger, Penge, dropping down, McIlroy felt it would work to his advantage when pairings change for the second round.

"I shot a really good score today and it puts me in the thick of things with three days

to go," said the 36-year-old who became the first European to compile the career Grand Slam when he won the Masters back in April.

"So, I am 100 per cent focused on what I am doing. After a day like today, I am not playing with Marco tomorrow. I can focus even more on my own game and try to win the tournament."

Kim, winner of the 2018 John Deere Classic, is having a solid season. The 32-year-old, born in Seoul and a resident of Houston,

won the FedEx Open de France in September.

"I am playing well and I enjoy travelling," he said.

"And it's not a big deal these days if you are playing a golf course for the first time, because our yardage books are so good and my caddie does a great job of reaching earlier and walking the golf course," added Kim, who made five birdies in the first six holes of his back nine.

The round included a terrific birdie on the 15th hole, the only time he looked like in danger of dropping a shot by smashing his tee shot left into the trees.

But a brilliant wedge shot over the trees from there set up a 5-footer for birdie.

Fleetwood, the FedEx Cup champion on the PGA Tour, has been living on the golf course for the past three years, and the 65 was as much a result of his familiarity as well as his brilliant run of form.

"I think my form is because of both mental and physical work that I have done," he said.

"We have been chipping away for a long time. We have played very consistently for a long time and now we are just having a great run. Hopefully, it's not just a great run and this is how I play golf, but we have got to see what happens in the future."

The tournament has the richest purse on the DP World Tour - \$10 million - and the top 10 players also get a share of a \$6 million bonus pool at the end of the season.

(Supersport)

## Former champion returns for Valencia finale after injury-plagued season

LAST year's MotoGP champion Jorge Martin will make his long-awaited return to the track for the season finale after being declared fit for this weekend's Valencia Grand Prix, his team Aprilia announced on Thursday. The 27-year-old Spaniard has endured a nightmare title defence, missing several rounds and managing to complete just four races as injuries from pre-season testing and crashes in Qatar and Japan decimated his campaign.

Martin suffered a collapsed lung and bruised ribs in Qatar, while his crash in Japan required collarbone surgery that kept him sidelined for multiple rounds.

As he watched from the sidelines, Ducati's Marc Marquez claimed his crown.

With Martin absent for much of the season, Aprilia shifted their focus to his teammate Marco Bezzecchi, with the Italian now on the verge of sealing third place in the championship behind the Marquez brothers, Marc and Gresini Racing's Alex.

"I can't wait to be back with the team. I'm really happy with the way the team is working and I'd like to congratulate Aprilia and Marco on the results they've achieved," Martin had said earlier this week.

"My goal now is to start preparing in the best possible way for next season. Now, it doesn't make sense to talk about results.

"The important thing is to put in the laps and gather information. I want to grow together with the team so that we're ready for 2026." (Supersport)



▲ Jorge Martin.



▲ Germany captain Joshua Kimmich.

## Captain Kimmich to miss Germany's World Cup qualifier with Luxembourg

GERMANY captain Joshua Kimmich has been ruled out of Friday's World Cup qualifying trip to Luxembourg, becoming the latest player added to coach Julian Nagelsmann's bulging injury list.

The German FA (DFB) issued a statement on Thursday saying that the Bayern Munich midfielder had "suffered an injury to his right ankle" and was ruled out of Friday's trip to Luxembourg.

The 30-year-old is likely to return for Monday's home clash with Slovakia.

Kimmich joins centre-back Nico Schlot-

terbeck and midfielder Nadiem Amiri on the injured list in Nagelsmann's squad for the matches, while forward Karim Adeyemi misses Friday's clash through suspension.

The Germans are already without Kai Havertz, Jamal Musiala, Marc-Andre ter Stegen, Antonio Rudiger, Niclas Fuellkrug and Tim Kleindienst.

Germany are level on points in their World Cup qualifying group with second-placed Slovakia but ahead on goal difference, with only the first-placed team guaranteed to qualify for next year's finals in North America.

(Supersport)



MTN PREMIER LEAGUE PREVIEWS

All ‘Birds’ at Mavuso

... As in form Rangers welcome wounded Mbabane Swallows, Moneni Pirates meet highflying Sea Birds

By Chris Dlamini

SOMEONE please bring a feather duster at Mavuso Sports Centre! It will be such a ‘Birdie’ evening when in form Rangers take on a wounded Mbabane Swallows ahead of the mini hub derby pitting an unpredictable Moneni Pirates against a strolling Manzini Sea Birds.

Who will have the last laugh as all four teams hunt for the maximum points? The action gets underway in a few hours, and thus question shall be answered.

Rangers for ‘Bullseye’ at ‘Birds’

Rangers vs. Mbabane Swallows  
Date: Friday, November 14, 2025  
Venue: King Sobhuza II Stadium, Nhlangano  
Kick-off: 3.30pm

Rangers is in no compromising mood no matter the size of the opponent - Bolova just mean business like they know very well that the early bird catches the fattest worm. They have worked their way up to eight (8) points and sit on seventh after Wednesday’s pending fixture between Tabankulu Celtics and defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs. Celtics shocked Nsingizini 2-0 to go on nine (9) points and also took over the third sport. At the summit is Manzini Sea Birds with 10 points, level with second-placed Green Mamba. Rangers has managed two good wins, two draws and one defeat.

They will be home away from home at Mavuso Sports Centre in Manzini, but that is one of their best slaughter venues after the King Sobhuza II Stadium in Nhlangano, their home ground. Fresh from a 1-all draw against Moneni Pirates, coach Mthunzi ‘Lomphofu’ Ginindza, definite coach of the month if the league had that award, knows this game is another tough battle especially because Swallows lost 1-0 to minnows Ezulwini United last week.

The Beautiful Birds will not allow yet another minnow’s team to have the better of them, which presents a very interesting tie. The league’s joint top scorer now, Hleliso Gamedze with five goals is the man to watch in the Rangers team as he seems to be scor-



▲ Rangers players celebrate a goal in this file picture.



▲ Moneni Pirates players during full time in one of their past matches.

ing in every game so far - will Tinyoni (Swallows) end his good run? You better be there to see for yourself.

Rangers will seek to win and keep soring in the standings, and that means not losing this one. Swallows also want to the top spot as it is a point away from them, at least before Thursday’s fixtufes got underway. So, a win may hand them just that - the top spot.

**LOG POSITION:**  
Rangers - 7th (8 points)  
M. Swallows - 5th (9 points)

**PERFORMANCE GUIDE:**  
Rangers  
W L W W D  
M. Swallows  
L W W W L

Mwase must ‘Meck-e it’ happen

Moneni Pirates vs. Manzini Sea Birds  
Date: Friday, November 14, 2025  
Venue: Mavuso Sports Centre, Manzini  
Kick-off: 8.15pm

It is a hub derby, a mini derby indeed. Looking back to previous meetings between these two hub sides, fireworks are what the fans can expect and it is quite interesting that Sea Birds seem to have found their rhythm, going three consecutive without defeat but wins only. Inyoni Zolwandle, as Sea Birds is affectionately known, rose from two opening defeats, but since then, they have been gaining strength and showing signs of a solid unit that is ready to cause any rival sleepless nights.



▲ Hleliso Gamedze Rangers.

This is how Moneni Pirates’ Malawian gaffer Meck Mwase must see Sea Birds - as a tough rival with so much quality in their squad including one of the country’s most priced assets in attacking midfielder Philani Mkhonto.

He is not only just valued at E1.4 million by Transfermarkt, but he is also currently among the top goal scorers in the country, continuing where he left off last season where he raked up eight league goals. Mkhonto currently has four, one less than the leading Malangeni Dlamini of Tabankulu Celtics and level with Rangers’ Hleliso Gamedze, the October Player of the Month. Should Moneni let him loose, he will cause them damage and put the coach, Mwase, under a lot of pressure.

Some sectors of the club already feel their team is lacking something they had before - that cutting edge which saw them play two knockout finals last season. Sea Birds just ambushed Manzini Wanderers 4-0 while Mwase’s Sea Robbers shared the spoils with leaders Rangers following a 1-1 margin. Pirates conceded late, just when winning was looking ever so close.

Against Sea Birds, who boast several capable goal scoring machines, they need to be as watertight in defence. If it’s not Mkhonto scoring, it is Joseph Kibonge, Muzi Tsabedze, among others.

**LOG POSITIONS:**  
M. Pirates - 11th (7 points)  
M. Sea Birds - 1st (10 points)

**PERFORMANCE GUIDE:**  
M. Pirates  
W L L W D  
M. Sea Birds  
L L W W W







▲ Bayanda Magagula.



▲ Simakhelwe Magagula.



▲ Thobani Myeza.

# Four stars get Pool National Teams call-up

Stories By Chris Dlamini

THE All-Africa Pool Association (AAPA) African Blackball Championship 2025 is just over three months away - Eswatini is onto early preparations. The AAPA Championship is billed for Durban, South Africa (SA), next year in February. With that international competition in place, the Eswatini Cue Sports Association (ECSA) Executive Committee has co-opted three players into the senior male and one into the ladies squads respectively. “As we prepare for both national and international events, the ECSA Executive Committee is pleased to announce the additional players for the national team squads. The committee has invoked their right to co-opt outlined in the Player Selection Policy and the results of the most

recent national championships. The additional player for ladies is Irene Mashaba,” read a statement by ECSA President Muntu Dlamini as posted in their official social media pages. The statement also went on wish the players all the best ‘as you prepare to don the national team colours’. Interestingly, the new male team call-ups include Malkerns Pool Club stars Bayanda and Simakhelwe, who now team up with their senior teammates Nathi ‘Bhubesi’ Sihlongonyane and Zweli ‘Siziba’ Dlamini. Meanwhile, Irene is fresh talent discovered recently during one of the ECSA competitions and impressed the executive committee. She joins a squad captained by the gifted Ncobile ‘S’ncobesh’ Dlamini.

“Additional players for the male team are: 1. Simakhelwe Magagula 2. Thobani Mnyezima 3. Bayanda Magagula.



▲ Nkhosinathi ‘Bhubesi’ Sihlongonyane.

## Ladies team in men’s league

THEY are gifted and fearless. That is Blackball Queens, a pool ladies team in a men’s league. They play under the MU and Lee Investments E30 000 Pool League under the auspices of the Manzini Regional Pool Association (MRPA). The ladies are captained by national team star Ncobile ‘S’ncobesh’ Dlamini. It is dominated by the senior national team stars. To show their resilience and talent, they earned their first point of the inaugural MU and Lee sponsored league despite losing the match. They stood their own against Que Potters last Saturday, going down 13-9, which was enough to hand the Queens a deserved first point after four games. MRPA Secretary Musa Dlamini said the ladies were very impressive, and it will not be long before they win matches. “They earned their first point,

and it says a lot about the effort they are putting in. Soon enough, they will get some wins,” he said. Meanwhile, at the summit is Malkerns with 14 points, one better than second-placed Way Inn. The latter have also played a game more than the leaders and third-placed Green Archers who have 12 points. Match week 5 Results: Que Potters 13-9 Blackball Queens Bhunya 11-13 Green Archers Mlandvo 13-9 Figareido Stairs 10-13 Malkerns Standby vs. Way Inn Blackball Queens 6-13 Matchweek 6 Fixtures: Saturday, November 15, 2025 Green Archers vs. Que Potters Stairs vs. Blackball Queens Mlandvo vs. Bhunya Malkerns vs. Figareido (NB: All games resume at 2pm)



▲ The Bank of Mozambique and Central Bank of Eswatini executives during the signing of the MOU.



# Bitter–Sweet news for ‘Weslians’

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela  
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

MANZINI Wanderers Director Mlamuli Mabuza has reportedly stepped down from his position. This follows calls from the National Supporters Committee to have the former Khubuta Member of Parliament relinquish the hot seat.

The Supporters Committee accused Mabuza of unfulfilled promises through their Chairman, Mthunzi Dlamini.

Mabuza had officially taken over the hot seat at the start of the current campaign.

A source close to the matter revealed the news to the Eswatini Daily news.

“Mabuza has stepped down, and he is in the process of handing over the Directorship,” the source said.

The club’s Public Relations Officer, Mongie Simelane, said he was yet to learn the news.

“I haven’t received any formal correspondence regarding the matter you are talking about. I can be in a better position to comment once I get something official from the directors,”he said.

Mabuza did not comment on the matter after his cellphone rang unanswered when compiling this report.

Mabuza was instrumental in the signing of three international players, such as Pius Bafour (Ghana), Sandile Mazibuko (South Africa), Mario Janine and Manuel Silima (both



▲ Manzini Wanderers starting XI during a recent match.

from Mozambique), among others.

Mabuza is set to be replaced by veteran administrator and current board member Sandile ‘Chief’ Dlamini in the hot seat.

Mabuza leaves the team at position 14 in the MTN Premier League standings with five points after five matches following their 1-0win over Ubombo Sugar FC on Thursday

at Mayaluka Stadium.

The ‘Weslians ‘ goal was snatched by Sili-ma in the first half.

Other MTN Premier League results saw Green Mamba play to a 2-all draw against Ezulwini United, while Royal Leopard were held to a goalless stalemate by newcomers Amawele.



▲ Mlamuli Mabuza has stepped down as Director at Manzini Wanderers.



## ‘We need to pull up our socks’

NSINGIZINI Hotspurs head coach Mandla Qhogi says they need to double their efforts to remain competitive in the MTN Premier League.

The South African mentor said this following their second defeat of the campaign to newcomers Tambankulu Callies by 2-0 on Wednesday at Tambankulu Stadium.

This was Nsingizini’s second defeat of the campaign after the recent 1-0 home loss to Green Mamba.

“We need to win games if we want to remain a respected team and must bounce back in the next matches. We were affected by a lapse of concentration, like in the CAF matches, where we were punished after trying to recover from the opposition’s early goal. We need to be clinical in front of goals, which was our major setback in today’s (Wednesday) clash,” he said.

The defending champions are currently sitting at position six with nine points after five matches in the log table.

The green and white ensemble will compete this weekend in the 2025 Prince Mangosuthu Cup on Sunday at Ulundi Stadium in KwaZulu-Natal.

The team were knocked out in the second



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs coach Mandla Qhogi.

preliminary round by Tanzanian side Simba SC with a 3-0 aggregate scoreline.

The local side pipped Zimbabwean side Simba Bhora FC in the preliminary round.

The Shiselweni-based side will take on the Betway premiership side Richards Bay, while Lamontville Golden Arrows will take on the ABC Motsepe side Njampela FC.

Each team is to receive over E350 000 participation fee.

## ‘Bull’ sweating on the injured quartet

CAPITAL city giants Mbabane Highlanders are racing the clock to have their four injured players for tonight’s MTN Premier League clash against Sisonkhe FC.

The injured players included crowd pleaser Andile Mpisane,Vusi Vilakati, Ndumiso Dlamini and Msimisi Zwane, who are doubtful for the assignment scheduled for the Mavuso Sports Centre.

The four players missed the recent 1all draw against Malanti Chiefs at Killarney Stadium. The crowd pullers General Manager Richard Makhoba confirmed the latest news when reached for comment.

“We hope our injured player will be ready and available for this coming match; Andile Mpisane, Ndumiso Dlamini, Vusi Vilakati and the goal poacher Msimisi Zwane,” he said.

The former Royal AM senior official also thanked the team’s supporters for their continued support.

“We are grateful for our supporters who continue to rally behind the team in numbers week in and out. I believe in unity and urge everyone who is wearing our club colours as Mbabane Highlanders AM FC to push. Thank you for buying the club replicas in numbers. I must say you looked very beautiful in your club colours, singing in the stands,” he said.

The Ernest Mavuso-led side is currently sitting at position eight with the same number of points after five matches.

Mavuso joined the crowd pullers’ side at the start of the season from Green Mamba.

Highlanders are now under the stewardship of South African businesswoman Shauwn Mkhize.



▲ Mbabane Highlanders players appreciate their fans after a match.





**SAFA missed  
chance to sharpen  
AFCON squad**

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**We need  
to pull up our  
socks – Qhogi**

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Eswatini Daily News Friday 14 November 2025

**Sport**



**Bitter-Sweet news  
for 'Westians'**

**. . .Manzini Wanderers director Mlamuli Mabuza reportedly steps down before hub giants recorded their first win of the season, beating Ubombo Sugar FC 1-0 on Thursday. *p23***