

## Eswatini protected by God — His Majesty Page 2



His Majesty King Mswati III and the Queen Mother, the Indlovukazi listening attentively to the powerful sermon delivered by renowned televangelist Mark Burns during the 2025 End of Year National Thanksgiving Prayer Service held at Mandvulo Grand Hall, Lozitha Palace under the theme: "Sing a new Song, For God has done Marvellous Things."

### POLICE WARN PUBLIC

## 'Avoid dams, rivers as torrential rains continue'

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has issued a strong safety warning to the public as heavy rains continue to batter various parts of the country. Acting Police Information and Communication Officer, Inspector Mazwi Ndzimandze, has urged communities to stay away from dams, large rivers, and all flood-prone areas.

■ SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

## Army race enters final stretch, remaining constituencies in preps Page 4



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# Eswatini protected by God — His Majesty

## ... His Majesty delivers message of hope at End of Year National Prayer



▲His Majesty King Mswati III delivered a very powerful sermon, urging emaSwati to put God first in everything they do.

**By Thokozeni Mazibuko**

HIS Majesty King Mswati III has reassured the nation that Eswatini continues to be protected and guided by God, calling on citizens to remain prayerful and united as the country approaches the end of the year.

The King delivered the message during the End of Year National Prayer held at Mandvulo Hall, where thousands gathered to worship and reflect on the nation’s journey.

In his sermon, His Majesty said the peace and stability experienced by the Kingdom, despite global and regional challenges, demonstrate God’s ongoing favour. He urged emaSwati to remain steadfast in faith and to continue building a society grounded in respect, love and responsibility.

The King reflected on the importance of prayer in strengthening national resilience. He said the nation has weathered various storms over the years because it has continued to seek divine guidance and has maintained unity.

“God continues to protect the Kingdom of Eswatini. We must remain prayerful, united and focused on building a peaceful and prosperous nation. Through prayer, we

overcome challenges and find strength as a people,” His Majesty said.

Mandvulo Hall was filled with hymns, worship sessions and intercessory prayers led by church leaders from across the country. Prayers focused on the nation’s leadership, economic renewal, young people, families and peace.

His Majesty reminded the nation that the End of Year National Prayer is a moment not only to reflect on the year’s blessings but also to renew dedication to unity and national development. He encouraged citizens to avoid division and embrace positive contributions that uplift communities.

Peace, the King emphasised, remains one of Eswatini’s greatest assets. He called on emaSwati to be custodians of harmony in their homes and neighbourhoods, noting that development can only thrive in a stable environment.

Religious leaders welcomed the King’s message, saying it inspires hope and reinforces the central role of faith in the national fabric. They committed to continue supporting moral and social development initiatives throughout the country.

As the gathering concluded, the congregation joined in collective prayer for protection and prosperity in the coming year, reaffirming the belief that Eswatini’s future remains firmly under God’s guidance.

By Thokozeni Mazibuko

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has issued a strong safety warning to the public as heavy rains continue to batter various parts of the country. Acting Police Information and Communication Officer, Inspector Mazwi Ndzimandze, has urged communities to stay away from dams, large rivers, and all flood-prone areas.

According to Inspector Ndzimandze, the continuous downpours have significantly increased water levels, creating dangerous currents that may not be visible to the naked eye.

“We are appealing to all members of the public to avoid dams and big rivers during this period. The water is moving fast and unpredictably. It only takes a few seconds for someone to be swept away,” he cautioned.

On Sunday, one of the rivers, Mlumati, was already at dangerous levels prompting urgent safety warnings for the residents of Mganda at Hhelehhele under the Ntfontjeni Inkhundla.

Community leaders are urging people to avoid informal crossing points as fast-moving water and rising currents pose a serious danger.

The police further emphasized that children are at high risk, urging parents and guardians to closely monitor them and prevent them from playing near water bodies.

### Road safety reminder

In addition to the flood warnings, Inspector Ndzimandze highlighted the growing number of road accidents linked to slippery roads and poor visibility. Motorists are advised to exercise extreme caution as the wet weather persists.

“We encourage drivers to reduce speed, switch on headlights, maintain safe

## POLICE WARN PUBLIC

# ‘Avoid dams, rivers as torrential rains continue’



▲Rivers flowing at full level after torrential rainfall are a danger to people and animals.

following distances, and avoid overtaking unnecessarily. The roads are wet and hazardous, so extra vigilance is necessary,” he said.

He also noted that potholes and washed-away road edges pose additional dangers, especially on rural and unlit roads.

The police have called on the public to report any flood-related incidents or blocked drainage systems to the nearest emergency services.

Communities living in low-lying or flood-prone areas are encouraged to stay alert and relocate temporarily if necessary.

Inspector Ndzimandze assured the public that the police, alongside disaster management teams, are on high alert and ready to assist where needed.

With the rainy conditions expected to continue, authorities are urging citizens to prioritize safety at all times.



By Delisa Magagula

MINISTER for Education and Training, Owen Nxumalo, has officially launched a major education infrastructure project in Eswatini, funded through a E117,361,011.58 grant from the Government of Japan.

The programme, covering four school sites across the country, is aimed at enhancing the quality of learning facilities and providing modern educational resources to students in underserved areas.

The schools included in the initiative are Lavumisa in the Shiselweni Region, Emngwenyeni in the Manzini Region, and Maphungwane and New Thulwane in the Lubombo Region.

The largest allocation from the grant goes to New Thulwane School with E60,906,850.67, followed by Maphungwane School, which will receive E26,232,949.73. The remaining funds will support the construction of Lavumisa and Emngwenyeni schools.

The grant will provide a wide range of facilities designed to modernise learning environments and improve educational outcomes. Each school will benefit from:

Modern classrooms are designed for effective teaching Administration blocks for school management Kitchens to support school feeding programmes Fully equipped laboratories for ICT, Consumer Science, and general Science Houses for teachers to improve staff retention in rural areas.

Sanitation facilities for both learners and staff Elevated water tanks for a reliable water supply Educational furniture and equipment for classrooms and laboratories.

The Ministry of Education and Training has emphasised that these facilities are not just buildings but essential resources for improving the quality of education in these regions. Proper infrastructure, modern laboratories, and housing for teachers are expected to contribute to better student performance and teacher satisfaction.

Worth noting, the project has been awarded to a consortium of local contractors, including Du-Van Developers, Spotlite Electrical Services, J&E Construction, Mormond Electrical Contractors, Immersion Africa, and Afrotim Construction. The contracts are scheduled for completion within an 18-month timeframe.

Minister Nxumalo urged communities surrounding the schools to support the contractors by safeguarding materials and infrastructure to ensure smooth progress.

He stressed that successful implementation would depend not only on the contractors' work but also on community cooperation.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Nxumalo highlighted Japan's long-standing partnership with Eswatini in the education sector.

"This is an investment in the lives of our children and the future of our nation. These facilities will transform teaching and learning for generations to come," he said.

Community leaders at the event welcomed the investment, noting that the upgraded schools will bring dignity, safety, and better opportunities for learners in rural areas.

Several chiefs and community representatives praised the Government of Japan for its continued support and commitment to improving educational infrastructure in Eswatini.

Chief Prince Kusa of the Lubombo Region, speaking at New Thulwane, thanked the Japanese Government for prioritising rural schools.

He noted that the new facilities would significantly enhance the educational experience for students who previously had to attend schools with outdated infrastructure.

# Japan boosts Eswatini education with E100m



▲ Some of the pupils to benefit from the fund.

Meanwhile, the Japanese-funded project is part of Eswatini's broader strategy to expand access to quality education and align with national development plans.

According to the Ministry of Economic Planning, improving school infrastructure in rural and semi-urban areas is a critical step toward achieving equitable education outcomes.

The construction of modern classrooms, laboratories, and administrative blocks is expected to provide long-term benefits by creating a conducive learning environment, attracting qualified teachers, and improving student performance.

This initiative also contributes to Eswatini's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by providing safe, inclusive, and effective learning environments.

Ensuring that all children have access to quality education infrastructure remains a top priority for the Government of Eswatini, and this grant from Japan represents one of the largest single-country investments in the education sector in recent years.

Noteworthy, Japan has been a long-term partner of Eswatini in various sectors, particularly education, health, and infrastructure.

The Japanese Government, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), has previously funded classroom construction, teacher training, and scholarship programmes.

The E117 million grant represents the latest phase in Japan's ongoing support, reflecting the strong bilateral relationship between the two countries.

According to JICA reports, investments in school infrastructure are intended to create not only better learning environments but also more resilient communities. By improving access to quality education, Japan aims to contribute to the social and economic development of Eswatini, while strengthening ties between the two nations.



▲ JICA Chief Representative Okada Kaoru.

The four schools targeted in this project are located in areas where educational resources have historically been limited.

Lavumisa (Shiselweni Region): Previously faced challenges with overcrowded classrooms and limited laboratory facilities.

Emngwenyeni (Manzini Region): A growing community with an increasing student population and limited infrastructure.

Maphungwane and New Thulwane (Lubombo Region): Rural areas where access to modern educational facilities has been a major barrier for learners.

Therefore upgrading these schools is expected to improve student retention, reduce dropout rates, and increase opportunities for learners to pursue further education. In addition, teacher housing facilities will encourage educators to remain in these communities, improving stability and quality of instruction.

The Ministry of Education and Training will oversee the project implementation and coordinate with JICA and local contractors to ensure adherence to timelines and quality standards.



▲ Minister for Education Owen Nxumalo recieved funds.

Once completed, the schools will serve as models for modern educational facilities in rural Eswatini, setting a standard for future infrastructure projects.

The E117 million investment underscores the importance of international collaboration in addressing educational challenges and highlights the commitment of both Eswatini and Japan to ensuring that children have access to high-quality learning environments.

According to the government, the launch of this project marks the beginning of a nationwide effort to strengthen education infrastructure and improve learning outcomes for thousands of students across the country.

Through strategic investment and community engagement, the programme seeks to create long-lasting benefits for learners, educators, and the wider community.





Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

THE national army recruitment race is moving into its final and most decisive stretch, with only a few constituencies left before the month-long exercise comes to an end.

Thousands of young Eswatini hopefuls have already taken part in the gruelling 3.2-kilometre race, which continues to draw strong turnout and community support across the country.

The recruitment race has so far run smoothly, with officials emphasising fairness, transparency and strict adherence to physical standards. For many young people, the race represents more than just a fitness test; it offers a potential pathway to secure employment, discipline, and a chance to serve the nation. Security authorities say medical teams and support staff will remain stationed at all venues to ensure participant safety as temperatures rise during the

# Army recruitment race enters final stretch

... As remaining constituencies prepare for competition

late-November heat. Candidates have been encouraged to arrive early, stay hydrated, and pace themselves carefully, particularly as competition intensifies in the closing days. Urban constituencies are expected to attract even larger numbers as the exercise moves toward completion. The final races in Mbabane East and Mbabane West traditionally carry the highest stakes, drawing some of the best-prepared candidates who have trained for months in anticipation of the recruitment season.

As the country watches the last batch of

athletes sprint towards the finish line, anticipation continues to build. The outcome of these remaining races will determine which candidates advance to the next stages of assessment, and ultimately, who secures a place in the national army.

**Below is the remaining official recruitment race schedule:**

18 November  
08:00 Mhlambanyatsi  
14:00 Siphooosini  
20 November  
08:00 Hhukwini

14:00 Maphalaleni  
22 November  
08:00 Timphisini  
14:00 Ntfontjeni  
25 November  
08:00 Motjane  
14:00 Nkhamba  
27 November  
08:00 Lobamba  
14:00 Lobamba Lomdzala  
29 November  
08:00 Mbabane East  
14:00 Mbabane West

# Cheaters will be handed to cops in upcoming races

BRIGADIER General Sotja Dlamini has issued a strong warning to army hopefuls as the national recruitment race enters its final constituencies, cautioning that anyone caught cheating will be immediately handed over to the police.

With the highly anticipated 3.2-kilometre races drawing closer in several large constituencies, the Umbutfo Eswatini Defence Force (UEDF) says it is tightening oversight to protect the integrity of the process.

Speaking ahead of the remaining race dates, Brigadier General Dlamini stressed that the army would not compromise on discipline or fairness. He said any individual attempting to manipulate results, cheat the system or run in constituencies where they are not eligible would face firm action.

“Cheaters would be handed to the cops,” he warned. “This process must remain fair to all genuine candidates. Anyone who tries to cut corners is not fit for the De-

fence Force.”

He placed particular emphasis on the role of community leadership, especially Bucophu, in ensuring that only legitimate residents of each constituency participate. Dlamini underscored that vetting at community level is the first line of defence against fraud, and urged local authorities to tighten verification before clearing hopefuls to run.

“Bucophu should ensure that the people participating in the race are of that constituency,” he said. “We rely on the vetting done at community level, and once someone has been approved to run, we expect the information to be accurate.”

The warning comes after isolated incidents in past recruitment seasons where some individuals attempted to run in more than one constituency or entered on behalf of others. The Defence Force says such attempts undermine the credibility of the entire recruitment exercise and disadvantage honest candidates.

Officials have further encour-

aged participants to compete fairly, arrive early and prepare responsibly, noting that medical teams and supervisors will be present at all venues to ensure safety and order. With urban constituencies still ahead, authorities anticipate large turnouts and heightened competition, making strict monitoring even more crucial.

This year’s recruitment race has so far attracted thousands of candidates across the country, with community support remaining strong. As the final constituencies prepare to host their races, the UEDF says it intends to maintain a high standard of discipline from the very beginning of the selection process.

Brigadier General Dlamini’s message remains clear: fairness, honesty and discipline are non-negotiable values. Those who hope to join the army must show these qualities not only during training, but from the moment they line up at the starting point.



▲ Brigadier General Sotja Dlamini has issued a strong warning to army hopefuls as the national recruitment race enters its final constituencies, cautioning that anyone caught cheating will be immediately handed over to the police.



Stories by Delisa Magagula

# 41 children placed in foster care in October



▲ The National Foster Care Placement Committee was officially commissioned by Hon. Senator Thulisile Dladla, Deputy Prime Minister of Eswatini.

CLOSE to 50 children under the age of 18 have been placed under foster care and guardianship across Eswatini this month, officials have revealed.

Deputy Director of the Department of Social Welfare, Marcelia Neves, said the department has been working closely with magistrates' courts in Hhohho, Lubombo, and Shiselweni to facilitate the placements.

Of the 41 children officially placed under foster care this month, 15 were placed by Shiselweni Magistrate's Court, nine in Hhohho, and 17 in Lubombo. All are minors under 18 years of age.

"Foster care is one of several alternative care options for children who cannot remain with their biological families. It is temporal rather than permanent and can be arranged on an emergency, medium-term, or long-term basis," Neves explained.

She added that social workers are involved in compiling socio-economic reports before placements are finalised.

Foster care involves placing a child with a non-blood-related adult willing to take responsibility for their welfare. Families interested in fostering can approach the Department of Social Welfare to apply.

The National Foster Care Programme operates under the Deputy Prime Minister's Office in collaboration with Challenge Ministries and SOS Children's Villages.

Neves said prospective foster parents receive quarterly training aimed at raising awareness on global and national trends in alternative care, building capacity among families, and strengthening understanding of child protection laws.

Training covers topics such as alternative care, the rights and responsibilities of children in foster care, government and partner roles, attachment issues, mental health, and reintegration of children back into their biological families.

After completing the training, participants are certified and vetted by the foster care

committee. A court order issued through the Attorney General's office then permits placement.

"The names of the foster parents and the child are published at the relevant magistrate's courts so that anyone who wishes to contest the placement can come forward. If there are no objections, the foster care and

guardianship placement proceeds," Neves said.

She further mentioned that the October milestone highlights the continued efforts by Eswatini's authorities and child protection organisations to ensure that children without family support are provided safe and nurturing environments.

## Pupils sign, tear shirts after final exams

AS Eswatini pupils completed their final exams this month, a growing number of students marked the occasion by autographing or tearing their school shirts.

The practice, observed across various schools, involves students signing shirts with permanent markers or writing messages to commemorate their years in school. Some learners also cut or tear their shirts, turning them into keepsakes.

Teachers and parents have expressed mixed reactions to the trend. Some view it as a harmless way for students to preserve memories of their school years.

Others have suggested that shirts, often still in good condition, could be donated to younger learners instead of being defaced.

Speaking on the matter, SNAT (Swaziland National Association of Teachers) posted on their Facebook page, which has over 80,000 followers that there were of mixed views about the matter.

"Not to say we are bitter, controlling or antiquated. As parents and educators, we should engage our children and learners (who are under the guise that they are done with school) in responsible living habits. Reckless living may have far-reaching repercussions. We should teach our children to practice selflessness, being human, empathy, philanthropy, contributing positively to the community etc. Nonetheless, Angeke sitsi siyanilawula. But we have a responsibility to impart what is called social etiquette," reads the post on their social media.

The post was met with a number of mixed reactions and responses from parents. Some echoed SNAT's sentiments sharing it was ir-



▲ Some view it as a harmless way for students to preserve memories of their school years.

responsible for the children to do this, citing there were other children who were in need of the shirt.

"Life is funny, next year they will need that shirt, I do not understand why they cannot just give it to the ones in need of the shirt," commented one parent.

"It's a once off thing, it's one shirt let the kids make memories as they leave their high school years," commented another parent.

Worth mentioning the practice has parallels in other Southern African countries. In South Africa, for instance, matric learners often have their shirts or jackets signed by friends, classmates, and teachers during farewell events.

Some schools allow students to donate or preserve these items as part of school memorabilia programs.

Several learners shared their thoughts on the tradition. Thabiso Dlamini, a graduating pupil from Hhohho, said, Signing shirts is a way to remember friends and teachers.



"When I look at all the messages later, I'll remember the laughs and the support over the years," Sibongile Mthethwa, another final-year pupil.

"I tore my shirt a little after everyone signed it. It feels like a rite of passage a small way to mark that this chapter is ending," said another pupil.

Others expressed more practical views, suggesting that shirts could be donated.

Lerato Nkambule said, she wanted to sign her shirt but also planned to give it to someone who needed it.

"It can be both a memory and a way to help someone else," she said.

Meanwhile, the Minister for Education and Training, Owen Nxumalo, commented on the matter and said pupils should consider giving back.

"Signing shirts is a way for students to celebrate their years in school and share memories with their classmates. We encourage learners to also consider giving back, such as



donating shirts that can still be used, while enjoying this important milestone in their education journey," said Nxumalo.

School authorities reported that the tradition has grown steadily over recent years. Teachers said students often carry markers to classrooms on the last day of school, and messages can range from names and doodles to personal notes and inside jokes.

Parents and guardians attending farewell events noted the excitement and energy among pupils, describing the ritual as a memorable part of completing final exams.

Some parents, however, have requested guidance from schools on how to balance celebration with sustainability, particularly regarding the donation of shirts.

Meanwhile, Social welfare organisations on social media have also weighed in, emphasising awareness about resource use and community contribution, aligning with SNAT's call for imparting social etiquette and responsible habits.

The practice continues to be observed widely across the country, with schools reporting both autographing and tearing of shirts as part of end-of-year activities.





# Cane cutter held for attempted murder

... He allegedly stabbed girlfriend 10 times

Stories by Thokozeni Mazibuko

A 33-year-old man from the Lubulini area has been arrested after spending weeks on the run following his alleged involvement in a brutal attempted murder incident in Big Bend in late October.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) confirmed the arrest, noting that the suspect had been evading authorities since the night of the attack.

According to the police statement released through the official REPS Facebook page, the incident occurred on 26 October 2025 at around a.m.:15 am. The suspect, who had been employed as a cane cutter in Big Bend, allegedly got into a heated altercation with his 37-year-old lover from Mkhalamfene af-

ter the pair returned home from a night out at a local drinking spot.

Upon reaching their residencies at Goboyane, an alcohol-fuelled argument escalated into violence. Police say the man allegedly stabbed the woman ten times on her upper body using a sharp object. Realising the extent of the injuries inflicted, the suspect fled the scene and abandoned his job, while the victim was rushed to Lubombo Referral Hospital where she was admitted.

Investigations later revealed that the suspect had returned to his home area in Lubulini, where he managed to secure new em-



ployment and evade arrest for several weeks. However, on 15 November 2025, a targeted intelligence-driven operation led police to his whereabouts. Officers arrested him at approximately 5:30 pm.

He is expected to appear before the Big Bend Magistrates Court to face attempted murder charges.

In its statement, the Royal Eswatini Police Service reaffirmed its commitment to fighting violence and abuse, particularly against vulnerable groups such as women and children. The police further commended the Big Bend investigative unit for its persistence and thorough work in bringing the suspect to justice.

The REPS concluded by assuring the nation that it will continue to pursue perpetrators of violent crimes and ensure that justice is served.

## Police reaffirm commitment to saving lives this festive season

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service has reaffirmed its commitment to protecting lives and ensuring public safety during the busy festive season. In a statement issued on Sunday, the police said the period demands heightened caution from both law enforcement and members of the public, as traffic volumes, social gatherings and holiday travel increase across the country.

REPS said its primary goal over the next several weeks is to prevent accidents, curb crime and maintain order while thousands participate in seasonal activities. The statement highlighted that police will be fully deployed on roads, at entertainment venues, in towns and communities to monitor safety and respond swiftly to any threats.

The police further emphasised that saving lives is at the centre of their operations. They noted that the festive season traditionally records a rise in road accidents, many of which are caused by speeding, drunk driving and reckless behaviour. Officers will therefore intensify checkpoints, breathalyser operations and patrols at known hotspots.

“Our commitment is saving lives and ensuring public safety. We urge the public to work with us during this period by acting responsibly, obeying the law and taking safety seriously,” the police said.

The statement encouraged motorists to

service their vehicles, avoid driving under the influence of alcohol, and respect speed limits. Travellers were also advised to rest when tired, plan trips wisely and ensure that all passengers use seatbelts.

Beyond road safety, REPS said it will also prioritise crime prevention as shopping centres, bus stations and entertainment establishments experience increased activity. The public was urged to be alert, safeguard personal belongings and report suspicious behaviour immediately.

The police stressed that community co-operation remains essential in reducing crime and preventing unnecessary loss of life. They called on families, event organisers and public transport operators to promote safety and discourage reckless conduct.

“We all have a responsibility to protect one another. Let us make this festive season peaceful and accident free. Police officers are on the ground, but we rely on the public to partner with us to ensure that everyone gets home safely,” the statement added.

As the festive period gathers momentum, REPS reiterated that the goal is not to inconvenience citizens but to preserve life and maintain order. The police encouraged emaSwati to enjoy the season responsibly and ensure that celebrations do not turn into tragedies.

## Police record 97 drunk-driving cases in 24 hours

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has raised fresh alarm over the growing cases of drunk driving after 97 motorists were arrested within a single day for driving under the influence of alcohol.

The figures were released by Inspector Mazwi Ndzimandze, the Acting Police Information and Communication Officer, who described the situation as “deeply concerning” and urged the public to take road safety seriously, especially as the festive season approaches.

According to Ndzimandze, the arrests were recorded during coordinated traffic operations conducted across all four regions in the past 24 hours. He said the high number reflects a worrying disregard for safety regulations, despite repeated warnings from authorities.

“It is disturbing that in just twenty-four hours, ninety-seven people were found driving while intoxicated. This behaviour puts not only the drivers themselves at risk, but also innocent passengers, pedestrians and other road users,” he said.

The police say alcohol-related accidents remain one of the top contributors to fatalities and serious injuries on Eswatini’s roads. Statistics from previous years consistently show a spike in collisions involving intoxicated drivers, especially during weekends and holiday periods.

Inspector Ndzimandze said the trend must be urgently reversed.

“Driving while intoxicated continues to claim many lives in the country. Families are losing loved ones, and many survivors suffer

life-long injuries. We appeal to all motorists to prioritise safety. Do not drink and drive,” he insisted.

### Zero-Tolerance Operations to continue

REPS has vowed to maintain high-visibility roadblocks and breathalyser tests as part of its zero-tolerance approach. Ndzimandze warned that offenders will face the full might of the law, including fines, licence suspension and possible imprisonment, depending on the severity of each case.

He further called on the public to use designated drivers, taxis or sober companions when engaging in social activities involving alcohol.

### Public responsibility key to saving lives

The police emphasized that road safety is a shared responsibility. While enforcement continues, Ndzimandze urged communities, families and social establishments to play their part.

“We urge members of the public to understand that drunk-driving is not only illegal, but it is deadly. The country has lost far too many people due to avoidable accidents. Let us all commit to protecting life,” he said.

As the holiday season draws closer, police say they expect traffic volumes to rise sharply, making responsible behaviour on the roads more crucial than ever.

Motorists are reminded that choosing not to drink and drive is one of the simplest ways to prevent accidents, injuries and unnecessary loss of life.



# BUSINESS NEWS

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### BE, TUCOSWA convene Bi-partite Forum 4.0

ESWATINI hosted a two-day engagement between its apex employer and labour bodies, reaffirming the commitment to structured dialogue between capital and labour. Business Eswatini (BE) and the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) convened the Bi-partite Forum 4.0 in Ezulwini on November 13-14, 2025.

### Skittish tech investors turn to Nvidia results

NEW YORK — Turbulence in technology stocks could ratchet higher in the coming week as investors react to the quarterly report from Nvidia Corp, the world's largest company by market value that is at the heart of Wall Street's artificial intelligence trade. Showing a steadier tone by late Friday, the benchmark S&P 500 equity index ended a volatile few days about flat on the week.

### UK mobile companies face mass lawsuit for allegedly overcharging customers

LONDON — Britain's biggest mobile network providers including Vodafone and BT's EE are facing a multi-billion-pound lawsuit for allegedly overcharging customers, after a London tribunal ruled on Friday that part of it could continue. The case – which is also brought against Telefonica's O2 and Hutchison's Three UK, whose \$19 billion merger with Vodafone was approved last year – was valued at over 3.2 billion pounds (\$4.29 billion).

## EswatiniBank

### FX RATES

| Notes/Cash  |              |         |
|-------------|--------------|---------|
|             | Buy          | Sell    |
| U.S. Dollar | 16.8452      | 17.3119 |
| G.B. Pound  | 22.6328      | 23.3083 |
| EURO        | 19.7921      | 20.3994 |
| 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 |         |

# Banks lost over E6.5mln to fraud in 2025

## ... 14.55% decline from last year

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI's banking sector recorded over E6.5 million in fraud losses in 2025, reflecting ongoing pressure from online scams and digital financial crimes.

The losses represent a 14.55% decline from the E7.69 million reported in 2024, according to figures from the Eswatini Bankers' Association Fraud and Loss Committee.

Eswatini's banking industry has continued to face substantial exposure to digital and impersonation fraud, with total sector losses amounting to E6,577,269.24 in 2025.

Although the figure is lower than the E7,697,014.71 recorded in 2024, the overall trend shows that cyber-enabled and identity-based fraud schemes remain a dominant threat to the stability of financial institutions.

This is according to data shared by the Minister for Finance Neal Rijkenberg when he officially launched the 2025 International Fraud Awareness Month under the theme 'Fraud Has No Boundaries: Guard Your Digital Wallet.'

The launch event, held at the Hilton Garden Inn, brought together representatives from the Central Bank, the Eswatini Bankers' Association, FinTech operators, and law enforcement agencies.

The data shows that while banks experienced a notable reduction in losses for in 2025, the numbers remain high and signal ongoing vulnerability to digital crime types observed including unauthorised online transactions, fraudulent debit orders, social engineering scams, account takeovers, and identity impersonation.

FinTech service providers, who have become key players in digital payments and mobile-based transactions, also reported losses amounting to E848,393.11, down from E1,865,158.36 in 2024.

This brings combined sector losses for banks and FinTechs to E7,425,662.35 in 2025, compared to E9,562,173.07 the previous year.

The data shows that the majority of losses continue to be driven by online fraud and e-commerce scams, now considered one of the fastest-growing fraud categories in Eswatini.

According to the findings these cases commonly involve compromised credentials, unauthorised digital purchases, and fraudulent transfers executed through online platforms.

Banks report increased targeting of customers through phishing links, malicious emails, cloned websites, and fake customer support calls designed to extract one-time passwords or banking information.

Impersonation fraud often referred to in the industry as FACATA remains the second most common type of loss reported.

The report states that, in these cases, individuals pose as bank officials, fintech agents, law enforcement, or government officers to trick customers into authorising transactions or revealing sensitive information.

Fraudsters have increasingly adopted sophisticated communication methods, including



▲Some of the industry captains at the launch.



▲EBA Chairperson Nedbank MD Fikile Nkosi.

spoofed caller IDs, scripted phone calls, and social media impersonation.

Minister for Finance Neal Rijkenberg noted that despite the decline in recorded losses, this is not an indication of reduced criminal activity.

Instead, he says, it reflects improvements in internal controls, monitoring systems, and customer-awareness initiatives.

"Fraud attempts remain high, with criminals adapting their techniques to bypass tightened security features such as multi-factor authentication, transaction-monitoring algorithms,

and enhanced verification processes," said the minister.

He further mentioned that FinTech firms report similar pressure, particularly in mobile-based transactions where SIM-swap fraud, account takeover attempts, and phishing remain recurrent.

Operators emphasise that mobile money users remain at heightened risk if they share personal details, verification codes, or PINs with unknown callers.

"The move toward digital financial services accelerated by convenience, accessibility, and industry innovation has expanded the attack surface for cybercriminals. Banks highlight that the widespread use of mobile banking apps, online shopping platforms, and instant digital payments has increased the number of entry points criminals can exploit," said Rijkenberg.

As a result, institutions are investing more deeply in real-time fraud-detection tools, artificial intelligence monitoring systems, and advanced customer authentication.

Meanwhile, law enforcement agencies report improved collaboration with banks, particularly in identifying fraudulent patterns, freezing compromised accounts, and tracing stolen funds.

However, cross-border digital fraud continues to limit recovery opportunities, as stolen funds can be moved rapidly across multiple financial ecosystems within minutes.

Furthermore, financial institutions are also increasing customer education campaigns, warning the public about emerging tactics used by fraudsters.

Banks emphasise that customers must avoid sharing verification codes, avoid clicking on unknown links, and verify communication before responding.

"The fraud environment continues to evolve, and despite progress made in 2025, the landscape remains active. Continued collaboration between banks, FinTechs, regulators, and law enforcement is considered essential to strengthening the country's financial resilience and reducing future losses," said the minister.



By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI hosted a two-day engagement between its apex employer and labour bodies, reaffirming the commitment to structured dialogue between capital and labour.

Business Eswatini (BE) and the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) convened the Bi-partite Forum 4.0 in Ezulwini on November 13-14, 2025.

The forum is part of an ongoing engagement based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organisations, which aims to strengthen industrial relations and address challenges affecting both employers and employees.

The Bi-partite Forum serves as a platform for structured engagement, where both parties systematically review progress on previous commitments and discuss emerging issues affecting the industrial landscape.

By providing this platform, the forum seeks to ensure that decisions made by employers and organised labour translate into actionable outcomes, with a clear focus on accountability and monitoring.

Therefore the fourth iteration of the Bi-partite Forum was structured around reviewing previous commitments and measuring progress.

Unlike introductory sessions that establish relationships, Forum 4.0 prioritises the evaluation of past resolutions. Participants examined the implementation status of decisions made in earlier forums, ensuring that unresolved matters are addressed and that action plans are clearly defined.

The forum also allows for the discussion of current industrial and economic developments. This includes an analysis of trends affecting business operations, workforce stability, and the broader economic environment.

By maintaining this structured dialogue, both organisations aim to respond efficiently to the evolving economic context and ensure that labour and business concerns are addressed promptly.

Meanwhile, E. Nathi Dlamini, CEO of Business Eswatini, highlighted the critical role of the private sector in driving employment. He emphasised that constructive engagement with labour organisations is essential to creating a pro-growth environment that supports job creation, innovation, and investment.

“The private sector stands ready to work with you to create a pro-growth environ-

# BE, TUCOSWA convene Bi-partite Forum 4.0



▲ Business Eswatini and TUCOSWA stakeholders.

ment that encourages entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment. Policy alignment is critical for the creation of jobs and sustainable economic growth,” he said.

Dlamini also commented on legislative developments, including the draft Employment Bill No. 12 of 2024, which proposes the prohibition of triangular employment relationships.

He cautioned that such measures could affect business operations if not carefully aligned with the needs of employers and the workforce.

The CEO further stressed that coordinated policy-making between government, employers, and labour organisations is necessary to support economic growth and employment. By ensuring alignment, the country can create conditions that encourage business expansion while maintaining fair labour practices.

Worth noting is that, Eswatini’s economic environment is characterised by high unemployment, estimated at over 35% nationally, with youth unemployment significantly higher.

A large portion of the workforce operates

within informal employment, presenting challenges for policy implementation and labour regulation.

The economy has shown growth potential but remains vulnerable to structural weaknesses, including a high concentration of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and limited Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Economists emphasise that structured engagement between employers and labour bodies is crucial in mitigating economic risks, maintaining stability, and supporting investment decisions.

An economist, such as Marko Kwaramba of the World Bank, notes that forums like the BE-TUCOSWA engagement serve as stability mechanisms.

In environments with high unemployment, social dialogue helps prevent labour unrest and provides a framework for implementing structural reforms, including skills development, labour policy modernisation, and workforce planning.

“Sustained, structured social dialogue provides a mechanism to mitigate the risks associated with a high-unemployment environment. It creates a consensus on nec-

essary structural reforms, such as skills development and labour policy modernisation, which are critical for attracting capital and ensuring a fair share of prosperity,” Kwaramba said.

The Bi-partite Forum aligns with International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards, ensuring that Eswatini meets international requirements for labour relations. Compliance with these standards is vital for maintaining trade relationships and fostering an investment-friendly climate.

While the forum concluded with ongoing commitments to review labour-related policies and industrial relations measures, it reinforced the need for continued monitoring and accountability.

By systematically evaluating past resolutions, both parties ensure that issues affecting the workforce and businesses are addressed in a structured manner.

The forum also highlighted the importance of joint responsibility in addressing the country’s economic challenges

By collaborating, employers and labour organisations can contribute to policy development, support job creation, and enhance competitiveness. The structured engagement underscores the shared commitment to economic growth, stability, and the development of a fair and productive labour market. Business Eswatini and TUCOSWA reiterated their commitment to maintaining regular, high-level dialogue. This includes follow-ups on outstanding issues from previous forums and the implementation of joint action plans to address workforce and business needs.

The continuity of such engagements is viewed as essential for industrial harmony, legislative alignment, and long-term economic resilience.

Noteworthy, the Bi-partite Forum 4.0 represents the continuation of Eswatini’s structured approach to industrial relations.

By fostering collaboration between employers and labour organisations, the forum contributes to a stable and predictable economic environment, laying the groundwork for sustainable job creation, policy development, and investment attraction.

## Finance ministry launches 2025 fraud awareness campaign

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Finance has launched the 2025 International Fraud Awareness Month, emphasising national efforts to strengthen fraud prevention in the digital financial environment.

The Government of Eswatini has officially launched the 2025 International Fraud Awareness Month under the theme ‘Fraud Has No Boundaries: Guard Your Digital Wallet.’

The launch event, held at the Hilton Garden Inn, brought together representatives from the Central Bank, the Eswatini Bankers’ Association, FinTech operators, and law enforcement agencies.

According to the Ministry, this campaign seeks to strengthen national fraud-prevention efforts as financial crimes continue

shifting toward digital channels.

Authorities highlighted the global rise of cyber-enabled fraud and emphasised the need for coordinated strategies to safeguard payment systems, customer data, and financial platforms.

During the launch, the Minister for Finance noted that fraud remains a persistent global risk. Citing international findings, he explained that organisations worldwide lose an estimated 5 per cent of their annual revenue to fraudulent activity.

The Minister underscored that as countries embrace digital financial services, fraud continues to evolve and expand across borders.

The national situation was presented using data from the Eswatini Bankers’ Association Fraud and Loss Committee, which recorded over E7.4 million in combined losses for banks and FinTechs in 2025. The figures reinforce the need for broader cooperation

between institutions, regulators, and enforcement agencies.

The government outlined ongoing reforms aimed at strengthening the financial system’s fraud-prevention capacity.

These include modernising financial regulations, enhancing cybersecurity standards, and supporting institutions as they deploy stronger authentication and monitoring tools. Authorities are also committed to improving interagency coordination to ensure faster investigations and improved recovery efforts. A core component of the campaign focuses on public awareness. Citizens are encouraged to stay alert when conducting digital transactions, verify payment requests, and report suspicious activity immediately.

“The Fraud Awareness Month initiative will include nationwide outreach, safety tips, workshops, and digital-security education targeted at households, businesses, and financial institutions,” said the Minister.



▲ Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg during the launch.



By Lewis Krauskopf

NEW YORK — Turbulence in technology stocks could ratchet higher in the coming week as investors react to the quarterly report from Nvidia Corp, the world's largest company by market value that is at the heart of Wall Street's artificial intelligence trade.

Showing a steadier tone by late Friday, the benchmark S&P 500 equity index ended a volatile few days about flat on the week.

Strength in the first three days yielded to a selloff on Thursday as uncertainty about the economic outlook and path for U.S. interest rates undercut optimism over the end of the longest-ever U.S. government shutdown.

The Cboe's VIX stock volatility index, the market's so-called fear gauge, reached its highest in about a month early Friday as stock index futures slid in early trade. Investors remained skittish about vulnerability to technology shares, which stumbled this month on concerns AI exuberance has driven up valuations to expensive levels.

With its AI chips, semiconductor giant Nvidia has been a bellwether for the theme that has lifted shares of an array of tech names as well as other companies involved in the vast infrastructure expansion to support AI use.

Nvidia is the "epicenter" of the build-out of AI, so its results after the bell on Wednesday will be important to the tech sector as well as areas such as industrials and utilities, said Matt Orton, chief market strategist at Raymond James Investment Management.

"If you don't see the growth that I think the market is expecting around Nvidia or the positive commentary that we are likely to get from Nvidia going forward, I think you're going to see more of a dent to those sorts of trades," Orton said.

Nvidia shares have soared about 1,000

# Skittish tech investors turn to Nvidia results



▲ An NVIDIA logo.

per cent since the launch of ChatGPT in November 2022. This includes a year-to-date gain of more than 40 per cent that made Nvidia the first company to surpass \$5 trillion in market value last month.

That market heft means the stock's moves can sway equity indexes. Nvidia carries an 8 per cent weight in the S&P 500 and a roughly 10 per cent weight in the widely followed Nasdaq 100.

Analysts on average expect the company to post a 53.8 per cent year-over-year rise in fiscal third-quarter earnings per share, on

revenue of \$54.8 billion, according to LSEG.

Analysts have also been getting more bullish about the company's future performance, with expectations for the company's fiscal 2027 revenue rising 15 per cent since late May to about \$285 billion currently, according to LSEG data.

"The assumptions that the market is making are positive, it's getting priced into the stock, and how the company guides will be very important," said Melissa Otto, head of research at S&P Global Visible Alpha.

Investors will also focus on commentary

from Nvidia related to demand or spending trends. Capital expenditures from hyperscalers such as Microsoft and Amazon earlier in the reporting season indicated no signs of slowing in the build-out of data centers and other AI infrastructure.

"You're not supposed to have any weakness given all the capital spending commitments from various companies," said Jimmy Chang, chief investment officer of Rockefeller Global Family Office. "Demand should still be looking pretty solid in the current environment."

Nvidia's report is one of the biggest remaining market catalysts in 2025. The S&P 500 is logging a roughly 14 per cent year-to-date gain, but Wall Street is wary of concerns stocks are in an "AI bubble."

Investors appear to be bringing more scrutiny to AI investment announcements, said James Ragan, co-CIO and director of investment management research at D.A. Davidson.

"We're moving into a stage where investors are going to demand a little bit more proof of concept in terms of what are the returns, what are the cash flows," Ragan said.

Aside from Nvidia's results, quarterly earnings from retailers are due in the coming week including from Walmart and Home Depot. A batch of economic data held up during the shutdown might also be released.

While the S&P 500 tech sector has struggled so far this month, other sectors are logging solid gains in that time, including healthcare, materials and financials.

"There's a realization that for investors, maybe that AI is not the only game in town," Ragan said. (Reuters)

## UK mobile companies face mass lawsuit for allegedly overcharging customers

LONDON — Britain's biggest mobile network providers including Vodafone and BT's EE are facing a multi-billion-pound lawsuit for allegedly overcharging customers, after a London tribunal ruled on Friday that part of it could continue.

The case – which is also brought against Telefonica's O2 and Hutchison's Three UK, whose \$19 billion merger with Vodafone was approved last year – was valued at over 3.2 billion pounds (\$4.29 billion).

The Competition Appeal Tribunal (CAT) in a ruling on Friday threw out those parts of the case claiming losses from before October 2015 as having been brought too late.

But the CAT certified claims for losses from after October 2015 could proceed to trial. Lawyers representing British consumer champion Justin Gutmann alleged the networks charged millions of British consumers who remained with the network after their minimum contract expired a "loyal penalty", by continuing to charge for mobile devices which had already been paid off. The networks' lawyers argued, however, that the lawsuit is fundamentally flawed as it alleges anti-competitive behaviour "in an industry renowned for its competitiveness".



▲ The logo of Vodafone is seen at a Vodafone store in Northwich, Cheshire, Britain.

EE said on Friday it did not accept the substantive allegations of the claim and intended to defend them robustly, while O2 said it welcomed the reduction in scope of the claim.

"We maintain that there is no merit to Mr Gutmann's case for the remaining period and will continue to robustly defend our position as it proceeds," an O2 spokesperson said.

VodafoneThree did not immediately respond to a request for comment. (Reuters)



▲ The logo of British multinational oil and gas company Shell.

## Shell ordered to pay legal fees in arbitration loss

VENTURE Global said on Friday that following Shell's recent loss in arbitration over liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply claims, an International Chamber of Commerce panel has issued an award ordering Shell to pay its legal fees.

"Venture Global looks forward to putting these proceeds toward our coastal restoration efforts along the Gulf of

America," a company spokesperson said, referring to the Gulf of Mexico.

Earlier this week, Reuters reported that Shell challenged its defeat in the New York Supreme Court, weeks after rival BP won a similar arbitration worth more than \$1 billion.

Both cases centered on Venture Global's failure to deliver LNG under long-term contracts while selling cargoes on the spot market as prices surged after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. (Reuters)



# Congo, M23 sign framework for peace in Qatar, more steps needed

THE Democratic Republic of Congo and the M23 rebel group signed a framework agreement on Saturday for a peace deal aimed at ending fighting in the country's east that has killed thousands of people and displaced hundreds of thousands more this year. The agreement was signed by representatives from both sides at a ceremony in the Qatari capital, Doha.

It was the latest in a series of documents signed in recent months as part of efforts, backed by the United States and Qatar, to end decades of fighting in Congo that has been an enduring threat to regional stability.

The framework was described by U.S. and Qatari officials as an important step toward peace but one of many that lie ahead.

## MANY DETAILS STILL TO BE WORKED OUT

The top U.S. envoy to the region, Massad Boulos, told Reuters the framework covered eight protocols, and that work still needed to be done to agree on how to implement six of them.

Boulos also acknowledged that implementation of the first two - concerning the exchange of prisoners and the monitoring of a ceasefire, which were agreed in recent months - had been slow.

"Yes, people were expecting to see probably some immediate results on the ground, but this is a process ... This is not a light switch that you just switch on and off," he told reporters after the signing.

M23, in the latest of a string of actions



▲ Congo's President Felix Tshisekedi's high representative Sumbu Sita Mambu and head of the M23 rebel group delegation Benjamin Mbonimpa take part in a ceremony to sign a framework agreement for a peace deal aimed at ending fighting in eastern Congo, in Doha, Qata.

supported by neighbouring Rwanda, seized Goma, eastern Congo's largest city, in January and went on to make gains across North Kivu and South Kivu provinces.

Rwanda has long denied allegations that it has helped M23, which has seized more territory in Congo than it has ever previously held.

Tibor Nagy, former top envoy to Africa during the first Trump administration, said much more work needed to be done to truly address the root causes of the conflict and the deep mistrust between the warring parties.

"It needs extensive hand-holding instead of multiple "drive-by" peace processes," he

told Reuters. "The players seem more interested in getting credit than results."

## CONFLICT CONTINUES IN CONGO AS TALKS MOVE AHEAD

In Congo, violence has continued through the various diplomatic processes in Washington and Doha, with Congolese authorities and M23 trading blame for violating the principles of earlier agreements and deliberately delaying talks.

And the prolonged negotiations do not address the threat from a multitude of other armed groups operating in the volatile east. On Friday, local officials said that as many as 28 people were killed by Islamic State-allied Ugandan militants in North Kivu.

Qatar has hosted multiple rounds of direct talks between the Congo government and M23 going back to April, but they have dealt largely with preconditions and confidence-building measures.

The two sides agreed in July to a declaration of principles that left many key issues at the root of the conflict unresolved, and in October they reached a deal on the monitoring of an eventual ceasefire.

Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi said Saturday's agreement set the parties on the path towards peace.

"Peace cannot be enforced by force, but is built through confidence, mutual respect and sincere commitment," he said.

(Reuters)

## Ghana scraps tax on minerals exploration to boost investment

GHANA will abolish value-added tax on mineral exploration and reconnaissance to boost investment in its mining sector, its finance minister said, as Africa's top bullion producer seeks to reverse over two decades of sluggish new development.

Ghana, which has been overhauling its mining sector, introduced the levy 25 years ago amid broader fiscal reforms.

The 15% tax covers exploration-related expenses such as drilling and assay work, hiking upfront costs for companies operating in the high-risk early stages of mining projects.

Industry groups, including the Ghana Chamber of Mines, have long argued that the tax discouraged greenfield investment and eroded Ghana's competitiveness versus the likes of Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Kenya, which exempt exploration from VAT.

"Abolishing VAT will revive investor confidence, stimulate greenfield activity, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the country's mining sector," Cassiel Ato Forson told parliament during the 2026 budget presentation on Thursday.

The measure, part of a broader VAT review, is aimed at promoting responsible mining and curbing unregulated prospecting that has degraded forests and waterways, Forson added.

## SMALL-SCALE MINING DRIVES RECORD GOLD OUTPUT

The policy shift comes after Ghana posted record small-scale gold exports between January and October.

Shipments surged to 81.7 metric tons worth about \$8.1 billion, surpassing large-scale exports of 74.1 tons worth \$6.6 billion for the first time, according to finance ministry data. Ghana had aimed to produce about 144.5 tons of gold in 2025.



▲ Mining machinery work inside a pit as commercial gold production begins at the Newmont Ghana Gold Limited, Ahafo North Mine, in Afrisipakrom community in the Ahafo Region, Ghana.

The surge underscores the impact of recent regulatory reforms that have formalised artisanal mining and tightened export controls, Forson said.

The Chamber of Mines welcomed the VAT removal.

"VAT on exploration negatively affected our competitiveness as a mining jurisdiction and was a clog on the pipeline of projects," its president, Michael Akafia, told Reuters.

Ghana's mining sector, which accounts for over a third of export revenues, is dominated

by gold alongside bauxite and manganese.

The government launched an audit this month - part of broad reforms - to boost earnings from the industry.

(Reuters)



# Walmart insider John Furner to steer next chapter amid AI bets and economic turbulence

IN 2020, as COVID-19 raged, John Furner - then chief of Walmart's largest U.S. division - consulted colleagues in China, drawing on their pandemic playbook to swiftly adjust inventory forecasts and fulfillment operations to stay ahead of panic buying.

Furner, a Walmart (WMT.N), opens new tab lifer who grew up in Arkansas where the retailer is headquartered, had lived in China for roughly two years. China, ground zero for the pandemic, had begun retooling supply chains and was months ahead of the U.S. in making decisions. Furner drew on that experience to understand what customers would need, he told reporters at the time.

When he takes the top job at Walmart on Feb. 1, his collaborative leadership style and deep company knowledge will be tested as he steers the firm through tough economic times, with tariffs pressuring margins and shareholders clamoring to see returns on the retailer's AI investments.

"The business is operating in a tough macro and competitive climate, especially with tariffs, pricing pressures and shifting consumer behavior," said Matt Prescott, president of nonprofit shareholder activist group The Accountability Board which is a Walmart investor. "We hope he can rise to the challenge."

### FURNER'S MANDATE IS CLEAR

Walmart had a good run under CEO Doug McMillon. Profits have grown 21% and shares surged four-fold, as McMillon transformed the big-box retailer into a technology-driven powerhouse during his 13-year stewardship. This year is no exception, as shoppers have flocked to its stores and websites to buy cheaper goods from the company's wide assortment of wares.

However, Furner has long been marked as his successor, two sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. They declined to be named because they are not authorized to speak with the media.

"I think it was pretty obvious to most people at the company that John was the frontrunner," one of the people said. "John is fantastic, well loved ... John's a guy who's wanting to try stuff so we have to change in this business all the time and innovate and I think that's the reason that people are going

to be excited about what's to come with his leadership."

Since taking charge of Walmart U.S. in 2019, Furner, 51, has spearheaded the launch of key initiatives including Walmart+, the company's premium membership program, and advertising, new sources of profit that the company says will reshape its future.

He has invested in wages, lifting the average hourly pay to more than \$17. He also modernized the company's warehouses and distribution centers to enable speedier deliveries and has been instrumental in building Walmart's advertising business, Walmart Connect, into a \$4 billion operation since it launched in 2021.

"His collaborative leadership style and operational expertise make him well-equipped to take Walmart even further from a sales and profitability perspective, particularly as the company navigates an AI-driven retail transformation," said Corey Tarlowe, an analyst with Jefferies. Furner's mandate is clear: to innovate and accelerate, Tarlowe added. Some of the areas where he could do that include Walmart's AI efforts, which span chatbots for search, partnerships with OpenAI, and incorporating the technology to make faster business decisions, analysts said.

### MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Furner, a keen mountain biker and pilot, has often spoken about the importance of drawing on outside perspectives to navigate fast-moving challenges.

"The world is just too complicated and moving too fast, and these relationships matter," he said in a 2024 interview, recalling that experience as important in navigating the pandemic.

Managing those relationships will be among his challenges.

"The biggest obstacle that John Furner will have to take on is being the face of a \$700 billion global revenue business, requiring deft management of media, investor perception, government relations and advocacy groups," said BNP Paribas analyst Chris Bottiglieri.



▲ John Furner.

Furner, the son of a Walmart employee, is likely up to the task. Having risen through the company's ranks like his predecessor, Furner worked as an hourly associate, and then in merchandising, operations and sourcing roles. He led Walmart's warehouse business Sam's Club from 2017 to 2019 be-

fore becoming CEO of Walmart US, where he oversaw 1.5 million associates and 4,600 stores.

"I think the future is exciting," Furner said in a video statement accompanying the announcement. (Reuters)

## Samsung, Hyundai announce domestic investments after US-South Korea trade deal

SAMSUNG Electronics , Hyundai Motor and other major South Korean manufacturers on Sunday unveiled domestic investment plans, as a U.S. trade deal raised concern investment in the U.S. could weaken manufacturing at home.

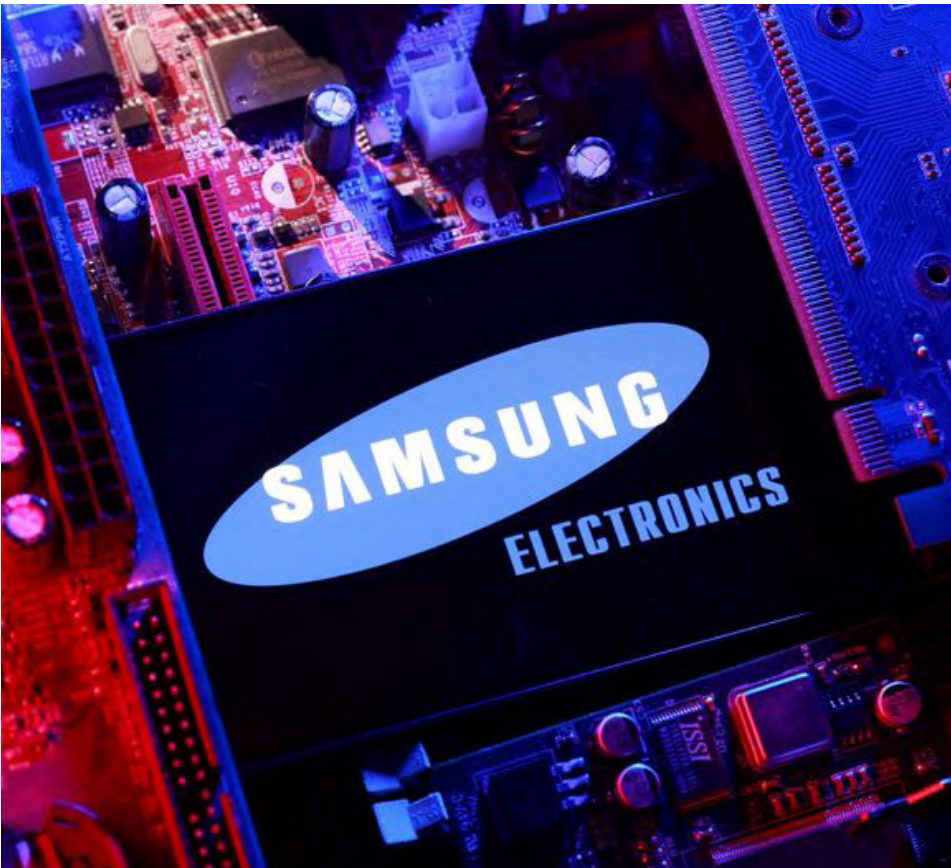
Samsung Electronics will add a chip production line at its plant in the South Korean city of Pyeongtaek to meet rising demand amid the global boom in artificial intelligence, as part of the parent group's 450 trillion won (\$310.79 billion) investments at home over the next five years, the company said.

Samsung's announcement came as South Korean President Lee Jae Myung held a meeting on Sunday with the country's business leaders, after a U.S. trade deal including a South Korean promise to invest \$350 billion in U.S. strategic sectors was finalised on Friday.

"There are concerns that domestic investment might shrink as U.S.-bound investments strengthen," Lee said at the meeting, as he asked companies to consider domestic investments more.

The president also asked companies to consult with the government to make good use of the \$350 billion investment package for their overseas investments.

"Samsung will raise domestic investment, create quality jobs for young people and make even more efforts for a win-win with



▲ A Samsung Electronics logo and a computer motherboard appear in this illustration.

small and medium-sized, as well as venture companies," Samsung Electronics Chairman Jay Y. Lee said.

At the meeting, Hyundai Motor Group an-

nounced domestic investments worth 125.2 trillion won from 2026 to 2030, while shipbuilders Hanwha Ocean and HD Hyundai also unveiled investment plans.

The new Samsung factory, which will make memory chips, will cater to demand for traditional and AI servers, a spokesperson said. Semiconductor prices are surging, as the global rush by chipmakers to produce AI chips tightens supply of those needed for smartphones, computers and servers.

Samsung Electronics this month raised prices of certain memory chips by as much as 60% compared to September, two people with knowledge of the hikes have told Reuters.

The new production line, or the P5 plant, part of the world's biggest chip complex, had been delayed since late 2023, as demand slowed for chips for smartphones and PCs, and oversupply, according to public filings of its builder, Samsung C&T Mass production at the P5 plant will begin in 2028, the South Korean chipmaker said, adding that it also plans additional infrastructure investments to support expanded operations.

"With the global AI era entering full scale, Samsung Electronics anticipates a mid- to long-term expansion in demand for memory semiconductors. In order to respond promptly to market changes, the company intends to secure production lines in advance," Samsung Electronics said in a statement.

(Reuters)



THE son and adviser of ousted Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on Sunday that supporters of her Awami League would block February's national election if a ban on the party was not lifted, warning that protests could escalate into violence. Sajeed Wazed's remarks to Reuters came a day before a Dhaka court was due to deliver a televised verdict that is expected to convict Hasina, 78, in absentia on charges of crimes against humanity for a deadly crackdown on student-led protests in 2024. She denies wrongdoing and says the case is politically motivated.

A United Nations report estimated that up to 1,400 people were killed and thousands wounded — most by gunfire from security forces — during anti-government demonstrations between July 15 and August 5 last year, the worst political violence in Bangladesh since its 1971 independence war.

Home to more than 170 million people, Bangladesh is one of the world's largest garment exporters, supplying major global brands. The industry was hit hard by last year's protests.

#### 'WILL PROBABLY SENTENCE HER TO DEATH'

Hasina has lived in exile in New Delhi since fleeing Bangladesh in August 2024. Wazed said India was providing her full security and treating her "like a head of state".

"We know exactly what the verdict is going to be. They're televising it. They're going to convict her, and they'll probably sentence her to death," said Wazed, who lives in Washington, D.C. "What can they do to my mother? My mother is safe in India. India is giving her full security."

Spokespeople for Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, who has been leading an interim government since Hasina's 15 straight years in power ended, did not immediately respond to requests for comment late on Sunday.

Hasina told Reuters in October that she



## Ahead of Hasina court verdict, son warns of Bangladesh violence if party ban stays

could move freely in Delhi, though she remained cautious because of security. Her parents and three brothers were killed in a 1975 military coup while she and her sister were abroad.

She said a guilty verdict from the International Crimes Tribunal, Bangladesh's domestic war crimes court, was a "foregone conclusion" because the "proceedings were a politically motivated charade".

Wazed, widely known in Bangladesh by his nickname Joy, said they would not appeal unless a democratically elected government took office with the Awami League's participation.

The party's registration was suspended in May after the interim government banned its political activities, citing national security threats and war crime investigations into senior party leaders.

"We will not allow elections without the Awami League to go ahead," he said. "Our protests are going to get stronger and stronger, and we will do whatever it takes. Unless the international community does something, eventually there's probably going to be violence in Bangladesh before these elections ... there's going to be confrontations."

#### MULTIPLE CRUDE BOMBS EXPLODE IN DHAKA

Political violence has surged in Dhaka ahead of the verdict, with several crude bombs exploding on Sunday and 32 blasts reported on November 12 alone, along with dozens of buses torched. Police have detained Awami League activists over alleged sabotage.

Authorities have tightened security, deploying more than 400 Border Guards, reinforcing checkpoints, and restricting public

gatherings.

Wazed said he and Hasina were in touch with party activists in Bangladesh, but not with the interim government or the rival Bangladesh Nationalist Party, which is widely expected to lead the next government.

"You're seeing in the last few days shut-downs across the country, massive protests throughout the country, and they're only going to get bigger," he said.

Hasina, credited with transforming Bangladesh's economy but accused of rights abuses and crushing dissent, secured a fourth consecutive term in an election boycotted by the main opposition in 2024, after many of its leaders were jailed or fled abroad.

Now, the tables have turned. "She's upset, angry, outraged," Wazed said. "And we are all determined to fight back by whatever means necessary." (Reuters)

## Britain to make refugee status temporary under asylum overhaul

BRITAIN said it would make refugee status temporary and the wait for permanent settlement would be quadrupled to 20 years under the country's most sweeping overhaul of policy on asylum seekers in modern times.

The Labour government has been hardening its immigration policies, above all on illegal small-boat crossings from France, in efforts to stem the soaring popularity of the populist Reform UK party, which has driven the immigration agenda.

The government said it would take inspiration from Denmark's approach, one of the toughest in Europe - where growing anti-immigrant sentiment has led to increased restrictions in many countries - and widely criticised by rights groups.

#### TEMPORARY STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW

As part of the changes, the statutory duty to provide support to certain asylum seekers, including housing and weekly allowances, will be revoked, the Home Office (interior ministry) said in a statement issued late on Saturday.

The department, led by Shabana Mahmood, said the measures would apply to asylum seekers who can work but choose not to, and to those who break the law. It said that taxpayer-funded support would be prioritised for those contributing to the economy and local communities.

The Home Office also said that protection for refugees would "now be temporary, regularly reviewed and revoked" if the home country was deemed safe.

"Our system is particularly generous com-



▲ Migrants walk along the beach before trying to board an inflatable dinghy leaving the coast of northern France in an attempt to cross the English Channel to reach Britain, from the beach of Petit-Fort-Philippe in Gravelines, near Calais, France.

pared to other countries in Europe, where, after five years, you're effectively automatically settled in this country. We will change that," Mahmood told Sky News on Sunday.

She added that under the changes, a refugee's status would be reviewed every two-and-a-half years, during "a much longer path to permanent settlement in this country of 20 years".

Mahmood said she would provide further details of the changes on Monday, including an announcement on Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights.

The government has said it wants to stay in the ECHR but change how the Article 8

provision, covering the right to a family life, is interpreted.

Mahmood said it was being "applied in a way that is designed to frustrate the removal of those that, under our immigration rules, would not have the right to be in this country."

The government's tougher approach has drawn criticism. More than 100 British charities wrote to Mahmood urging her to "end the scapegoating of migrants and performative policies that only cause harm", saying such steps are fuelling racism and violence.

Polls suggest immigration has overtaken the economy as British voters' top concern.

Over the summer, protests took place outside hotels housing asylum seekers at public expense.

A total of 109,343 people claimed asylum in the UK in the year ending March 2025, a 17% rise on the previous year and 6% above the 2002 peak of 103,081.

Mahmood said the government would look to open more "safe and legal" routes for asylum seekers, as she believed Britain should play its part in helping those fleeing danger.

#### UK GOVERNMENT INSPIRED BY DENMARK, OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

The Home Office said its reforms would look to "match and in some areas exceed" the standards of Denmark and other European countries, where refugee status is temporary, support is conditional and integration in society is expected.

Asylum seekers are granted temporary residence permits under Denmark's approach, usually for two years, and they must reapply when these expire. They can be repatriated if their home country is deemed safe, and the path to citizenship has also been lengthened.

The Home Office said Denmark's more restrictive immigration policies had reduced asylum claims to a 40-year low and resulted in the deportation of 95% of rejected applicants.

Denmark's reforms, implemented while it remains a signatory to the ECHR, have drawn sharp criticism. Rights groups say the measures foster a hostile climate for migrants, undermine protection and leave asylum seekers in prolonged limbo.

(Reuters)



# True Classic named official Kabisa brand ambassadors

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
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TRUE Classic, one of Eswatini’s most dynamic music ensembles, has been officially announced as the new brand ambassadors for Kabisa.

Kabisa is a brand of energy and soft drinks from the Mutalo Group, known for its distinct branding and a variety of flavours like Energy, Spicy Ginger, Party, and Vitamin Drink. The drinks are manufactured in Poland and are sold in over 100 countries. They are marketed as a unique beverage choice that provides energy and refreshment.

The group, composed of talented artists M Nation, Cool Drop, DJ Citie, and Histo, confirmed the exciting partnership in a recent interview, expressing enthusiasm and gratitude for the opportunity. The announcement marks a significant milestone for both True Classic and Kabisa, signalling a collaboration that promises to blend the vibrant energy of Eswatini’s music scene with the innovative spirit of the Kabisa brand.

True Classic has steadily built a reputation for its unique sound and engaging performances, making it an ideal representative for a brand that values quality, creativity, and community connection. In an exclusive interview, M Nation, one of the ensemble’s front figures, spoke candidly about the group’s feelings regarding the new role.

“We are thrilled and honoured to be chosen as Kabisa ambassadors! It’s a privilege to partner with a brand that shares our values and commitment to quality. We’re excited to represent Kabisa



▲ True Classic.

and contribute to its mission,” he said. M Nation emphasised the significance of the partnership beyond mere branding.

### Collaborations

“Collaborations like this are invaluable to True Classic. They allow us to reach new audiences, build brand awareness, and create unique experiences for Kabisa customers. We’re looking forward to a fruitful partnership that benefits both our brands,” he explained.

The partnership also represents a vote

of confidence in True Classic’s growing influence and professionalism. M Nation extended heartfelt appreciation for the support that has propelled the group to this point. “We are grateful for the support that has brought us to this point. Kabisa’s belief in our brand and its investment in our partnership are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team. We appreciate the opportunity to work together and look forward to a successful collaboration,” he remarked.

## ‘Nhliziyo Ngise’ tour brings Mduduzi Ncube to Ngculwini

SOUTH African singer-songwriter Mduduzi Ncube is gearing up to headline the much-anticipated ‘Nhliziyo Ngise’ tour.

The ‘Isiginci’ hitmaker is set to bring his unique sound to the vibrant stage of Ehawini Lifestyle in Ngculwini on November 21, 2025. This event promises to be a landmark moment in the region’s music calendar, celebrating not only Ncube’s artistry but also the rich cultural tapestry of Southern African music. The ‘Nhliziyo Ngise’ tour has already generated significant buzz, with venues like Espinho Lounge confirming their participation, signalling a well-curated series of concerts that will showcase a blend of talent and energy.

Ehawini Lifestyle, known for its dynamic atmosphere and commitment to promoting local music, provides the perfect backdrop for this event. Doors will open at 3 pm, allowing attendees to settle in and prepare for an evening that will extend late into the night, filled with music, dance, and communal celebration. Supporting Mduduzi Ncube on this tour are a trio of acclaimed DJs, Layla, DJ Fats, and DJ Prince, each bringing their distinct style and expertise to keep the crowd energised and engaged throughout the night.

Their presence ensures a seamless flow of music that complements Ncube’s live performance, creating an immersive

experience for all attendees. Adding to the event’s vibrancy is Charlie Bee, who will serve as the master of ceremonies. Ticketing for the event has been thoughtfully structured to accommodate a wide range of fans. Presale tickets are priced at E50, encouraging early attendance, while gate entry is set at E80, offering flexibility for those who decide to join the festivities later.

Mduduzi Ncube’s journey to becoming a celebrated artist is a testament to his resilience and passion for music. His breakout hit, ‘Isiginci,’ struck a chord with listeners across Southern Africa, thanks to its poignant storytelling and emotional resonance. The song’s themes of love, struggle, and perseverance mirror Ncube’s own life experiences, allowing fans to connect with his music on a deeply personal level.

A defining moment in Ncube’s career occurred in 2017 when he received a guitar as a gift. This simple yet profound gesture rekindled his passion for music, providing a creative outlet that would shape his future. The guitar became more than an instrument; it was a symbol of hope and self-expression that propelled him forward.

Ncube’s breakthrough came in 2019 when DJ Tira, a prominent figure in the South African music scene known for discovering and mentoring new talent, recognised his potential. Under DJ Tira’s guidance, Ncube recorded two songs, one featuring the



▲ Mduduzi Ncube.

acclaimed singer Berita, further elevating his profile and expanding his audience.



▲ Deep Essentials.

## Deep Essentials to headline ‘Black Crown Sunday’

DEEP Essentials, the acclaimed South African house music duo, are poised to bring their signature sound to the Brussels Lounge.

The stars are set for the much-anticipated ‘Black Crown Sunday’ event on November 30, 2025. The event, running from 2 pm until late into the night, promises a vibrant celebration of house music culture and community, with free entry welcoming music lovers to experience an unforgettable day of rhythm and energy.

Hailing from Tembisa, South Africa, Deep Essentials consists of Basani “KDD” Khoza and Thato “London SA” Manthata, two talented producers and DJs who have carved a distinctive niche in the house music scene. Their music is characterised by a rich blend of soulful melodies, infectious grooves, and innovative production techniques that reflect both their deep roots and forward-thinking artistry. Over the years, they have collaborated with some of South Africa’s most prominent artists, further cementing their reputation as influential figures in the genre.

### Ability

The ‘Black Crown Sunday’ event at Brussels Lounge will showcase Deep Essentials as the headlining act, setting the tone for an immersive musical journey. Their ability to sculpt sonic landscapes that resonate with emotion and energy makes them a perfect fit for the event’s ethos. Fans can expect a set filled with harmonious melodies and pulsating beats that linger long after the music stops, capturing the essence of house music’s power to connect and uplift.

Supporting Deep Essentials is an exciting lineup of local talent, including Lil D, Mafaka, Cnatra, Master Jack, The Bishop, Selby, and Drum Rhythm, among others. This diverse roster of artists promises to deliver a dynamic and eclectic mix of sounds, ensuring that the event caters to a wide range of house music enthusiasts. Each artist brings their unique style and energy, contributing to a rich tapestry of performances that celebrate the genre’s vibrant culture.



# Sarnilo drops new EP featuring Touchline

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

SARNILO, the music sensation from Eswatini, has recently released her much-anticipated EP titled ‘Makuhwalala,’ featuring a standout collaboration with South African rapper Touchline.

The EP, which was met with widespread acclaim, marks a significant milestone in Sarnilo’s burgeoning career and showcases her dynamic range as a singer, songwriter, rapper, and producer. Announcing the release on social media, Sarnilo expressed her gratitude, saying, “Makuhwalala is officially out, everywhere. Thank you to all the incredible artists, producers, and hands that helped build this.”

The six-track project includes songs such as ‘Lights Off,’ ‘Addict,’ ‘Bad,’ ‘Don’t Be Shy,’ ‘Time,’ and ‘Different Dimensions,’ featuring notable artists like Touchline, Mzwaa, Grixxly, and Nana Magagula.

Sarnilo’s music is distinguished by its eclectic blend of soul, rap, and Afro-centric influences, reflecting her unique bi-cultural heritage. Born to a Malawian mother and a Swati father, she seamlessly weaves SiSwati and Chichewa languages into her lyrics, creating a rich tapestry of sound that resonates with diverse audiences.

Her musical influences span some of the most iconic black women in music, including Lauryn Hill, Erykah Badu, Sampa The Great, Msaki, and Ami Faku. These inspirations are evident in her work, which



▲ Sarnilo.

blends introspective storytelling with a fresh, contemporary Afrobeat sensibility. Sarnilo’s commitment to artistic growth and collaboration has led her to work with acclaimed producers and artists such as Austrian producer Aramboa and South African rapper and poet Zuluboy.

## Complements

Touchline, whose real name is Thabo Mahlwele, complements Sarnilo’s style

with his own brand of lyrical honesty and storytelling. Hailing from Johannesburg, Touchline has carved out a niche in the South African hip-hop scene with his ability to blend traditional hip-hop with other genres, creating a sound that is both authentic and innovative. He gained recognition in the late 2010s and continues to build momentum with projects like his latest album, ‘Mambisa Golden Boy.’

# ‘Mtukulu’ surpasses 40,000 Spotify streams

LYRIKAL Busta’s latest single “Mtukulu” has made a remarkable impact since its release, amassing over 40,000 streams on Spotify within just two months.

The single, a collaboration with South African award-winning artist Intaba Yase Dubai, was launched on September 26, 2025, across all major digital platforms. In addition to its Spotify success, “Mtukulu” has garnered more than 15,000 streams on YouTube, reflecting its widespread appeal. The song’s title, which means “grandchild” in SiSwati, encapsulates its heartfelt narrative and cultural depth.

“Mtukulu” explores themes of nostalgia, hope, and unity through a touching story. Lyrikal Busta explains that the song portrays an elderly man who repeatedly asks his grandson to play the track because it stirs cherished memories of the past. The song’s vibrant and uplifting beat transforms it into a dance anthem, perfectly timed for the festive celebrations in December. “It’s a happy and energetic anthem, and people will most definitely have something to dance to this December,” Lyrikal Busta shared.

Beyond its musicality, “Mtukulu” carries a powerful cultural message. Lyrikal Busta aimed to create a piece that resonates across generations, weaving a narrative that honours African heritage and identity. The collaboration with Intaba Yase Dubai was a deliberate choice to promote unity among Africans, especially considering recent xenophobic tensions in the region. “The aim was to create a song that would resonate with different age groups and tell a story of where we come from as African people.



▲ Lyrikal Busta.

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

## Rhythms

Musically, the single is a masterful blend of Sofiatown’s soulful vibes and the infectious rhythms of Amapiano, a genre that has taken Southern Africa by storm. South African producer Skathl Beats crafted the production, while Sean Cast HQ handled the engineering, ensuring a polished and professional sound that honours both tradition and modernity.

Reflecting on the creative process, Lyrikal Busta described his collaboration with Intaba Yase Dubai as enriching and inspiring. Their previous joint effort, “365

Days,” achieved significant success with over 1 million views on streaming platforms, setting high expectations for “Mtukulu.” “Working on the song was amazing as I got to learn more from renowned South African award-winning artist Intaba Yase Dubai,” he remarked.

The release of “Mtukulu” marks a significant moment for Eswatini’s music industry, signalling the country’s rising prominence in the regional music landscape. Lyrikal Busta encourages his fellow emaSwati to support the single by sharing and streaming it widely. “I would encourage all emaSwati to share the news and, most importantly, stream ‘Mtukulu’ as we promise nothing but top-tier quality of Eswatini music,” he concluded.



▲ Mistosoul.

## IF’s Lounge hosts ‘Good Vibes Only’ jam session

ESWATINI’S vibrant music scene is set to shine brighter with the upcoming “Good Vibes Only” Jam session, scheduled for November 23, 2025, at the popular IF’s Lounge in Mbabane.

The jam session will feature a stellar lineup of artists including Tariibo, Phile, Majaha, Cage, and Joseph, each bringing their unique sound and flair to the stage. Attendees are encouraged to adhere to the event’s smart casual dress code, which perfectly complement the lounge’s chic and inviting ambience.

The “Good Vibes Only” Jam is the result of a creative collaboration between IF’s Lounge Mbabane and the Good Vibes Band, a partnership born out of a shared vision to breathe new life into Eswatini’s live music scene. Mistosoul, the entertainment manager at IF’s Lounge, shed light on the motivation behind this initiative. He explained, “This event is about bridging gaps in our entertainment industry and bringing live music performances closer to our community. We want to revitalise the local music scene by showcasing homegrown talent and creating memorable experiences that foster cultural pride and inspire further artistic collaborations.”

More than just a concert, the event is designed as a cultural gathering where music enthusiasts can immerse themselves in a rich blend of classic hits, fresh original compositions, and crowd-pleasing covers. Mistosoul described the expected atmosphere, “Set against the cosy and vibrant backdrop of IF’s Lounge Balcony, the night will be filled with soulful melodies and upbeat rhythms delivered by both the Good Vibes Band and our main guest artists. We’ll offer great drinks, light bites, and plenty of space to dance and connect, no stuffy crowds, just pure enjoyment.”

This jam session reflects a growing movement within Eswatini’s entertainment industry focused on fostering collaboration, supporting local artists, and cultivating a thriving live music culture. By uniting diverse talents and audiences in an intimate setting, “Good Vibes Only” aims to strengthen community bonds and elevate the country’s musical landscape.





# Travel & Leisure



## IT'S ALMOST TIME:

**T**he Kingdom is calling, not with a whisper, but with the roar of waterfalls, a chorus of birdlife, and the serene silence of its ancient landscapes.

Forget the crowded and predictable; this is a land of breathtaking vistas, hidden gems, and newly emerging spots waiting to be discovered. Why let another year pass with a suitcase full of dreams, when an authentic, soul-stirring adventure is just a short, scenic drive away?

This is a country that delights in variety. Imagine starting your day in cool, lush highlands, where the air is crisp and the views stretch for miles.

# Answer the call of the kingdom this festive season



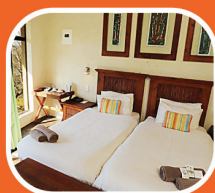

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By afternoon, you could be meandering through rolling, golden valleys or exploring dramatic, sun-drenched lowlands. This is a place that offers a little something for every kind of traveller.

### Your Festive Season Itinerary: Chase Sunsets and Serenity

This season, reward yourself for a year of resilience and hard work. Plan that long-awaited trip and do it on your own terms.

Take the Scenic Route: Ditch the highway and let the winding backroads lead you to unexpected viewpoints and charming, off-the-beaten-path communities. Every turn reveals a new picture-postcard scene.

Chase the Sunsets: The sky here puts on a daily masterpiece. Find a high point a majestic rock summit or a quiet hilltop and watch as the heavens erupt in hues of fire and gold.

Spend Time Near Water: There's something inherently restorative about being near water. Make it a theme for your trip. Follow the sound of rushing water to find hidden falls. Enjoy a leisurely picnic beside tranquil dams. Let the rhythm of the rivers slow your own.

### The beauty of discovery: Far away, yet so close

Perhaps the most compelling magic of this kingdom is its accessibility. You don't need to embark on a long-haul flight to feel a world away. In just a few hours, you can be immersed in a rich, vibrant culture, surrounded by

breathtaking nature that feels untouched by time.

It's the ultimate escape, conveniently close to home.

This festive season, pack your bags with a sense of curiosity. Embrace the explorer within the one who says 'yes' to dusty roads, 'yes' to new tastes, and 'yes' to the call of the wild.

### Be Dora. Be Out and About. Discover the Journey.

Your adventure is waiting. Start planning your escape today.

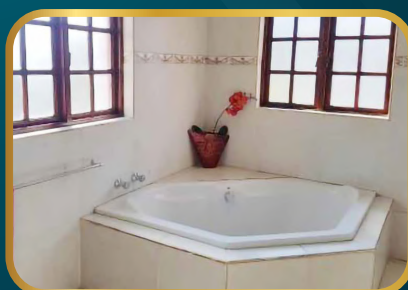
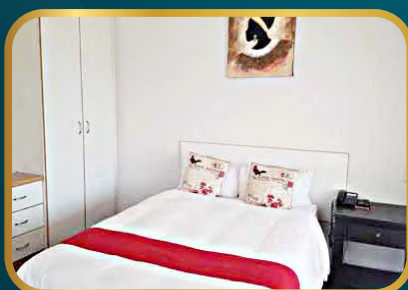


**IMMANUEL**  
Guest House

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# IMMANUEL GUEST HOUSE

**A Warm Welcome Awaits You...**





MOST cold medications contain stimulants, which, if taken alongside caffeine, can lead to heightened side effects.

It's recommended that you avoid caffeine if you're taking any medications for a cold or flu.

Caffeine is a central nervous system stimulant commonly found in beverages such as coffee, tea, energy drinks, and some sodas. When mixed with other stimulants, such as cold and flu medications, it can lead to increased side effects, such as restlessness, headaches, and nausea.

Learn more about the interactions between caffeine and cold medications, alternative options, and when you should speak with a doctor.

Can caffeine interact with cold medicine?

Cold medications contain ingredients such as pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine, which can help to reduce nasal congestion and allow you to breathe more easily.

However, these ingredients are also active stimulants, which can affect your central nervous system and lead to side effects such as:

- ▶ feeling shaky or nervous
- ▶ restlessness
- ▶ nausea
- ▶ dry mouth
- ▶ difficulty sleeping

Other stimulants, such as caffeine, can affect the way a drug is absorbed and processed in the body. This can make the medication itself less efficient, and any side effects may become heightened.

For example, feeling nervous or restless may grow into feelings of anxiety and jitteriness.

What are the risks of drinking caffeine with cold medicine?

In some cases, drinking large amounts of caffeine with medications can lead to serious complications such as:

- ▶ high blood pressure
- ▶ dehydration
- ▶ heart palpitations
- ▶ heart attack or stroke
- ▶ increased heart rate

Additionally, some pain relievers may already contain caffeine, and if consumed with a beverage such as coffee, can increase the risk of further complications.

How long should you wait to drink caffeine after taking cold medicine?

There's no set time as to when you can resume drinking caffeine after taking your medication. Some healthcare professionals recommend waiting at least 1 hour after you take your medication. This can help to limit any negative interactions and ensure the drug can work effectively.

A healthcare professional can help you determine the best time to take your medication and if and when it's safe to also consume caffeine.

Alternative options to caffeine

If you have a cold or flu, try swapping out your morning coffee for beverages such as noncaffeinated herbal teas. While it may not have the same energy kick, it can provide additional nutrients that can help to soothe and manage cold symptoms.



# Can you drink caffeine with cold medicine?

● Most cold medications contain stimulants, which, if taken alongside caffeine, can affect the way a drug is absorbed and processed in the body.

When to see a doctor

If you have taken cold or flu medication and experience any of the following side effects, it's important to seek immediate medical support:

- ▶ heart palpitations that are not stopping or keep coming back
- ▶ a high temperature (above 100.4 °F or 38°C)
- ▶ skin discoloration or the appearance of pustules (pus-filled bumps)
- ▶ sudden nausea or vomiting

If you do experience any of the above symptoms, it's important to stop taking the medication right away.

Can you take cold medicine and caffeine?

Coffee can cause negative interactions, such as heightened anxiety and nausea, when taken with cold medications, and so it should be avoided.

How long after taking medicine can I drink coffee?

There's no set time as to when you can resume drinking caffeine after taking your medication. A healthcare professional can help you determine the best time to take your medication and if and when it is safe to also consume caffeine.

The bottom line

Most cold medications contain stimulants, which, if taken alongside caffeine, can affect the way a drug is absorbed and processed in the body.

This can mean the medication itself may be less efficient, and any side effects may become heightened. For example, feeling nervous or restless may grow into feelings of anxiety and jitteriness.

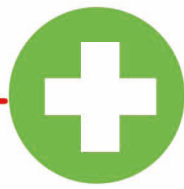
It's recommended that you avoid caffeine if you're taking any medications for a cold or flu.

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Healthline

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VEGETABLES like spinach, kale, and onions can support your heart health.

You can eat more of these vegetables through meal planning and making vegetables more visible in your fridge.

Vegetables play a key role in supporting heart health. The American Heart Association recommends that adults consume at least 2 1/2 cups of vegetables per day.

However, it can be challenging to reach this recommended intake, especially if you aren't used to eating a lot of vegetables. Keep reading to learn more about vegetables that promote heart health, as well as how to incorporate more of them into your diet.

#### Which vegetables should I be eating?

All vegetables can support heart health in some capacity. However, some vegetables may be more beneficial than others. A 2018 study found that certain vegetables may have more heart health benefits, including:

- onions
- garlic
- cruciferous vegetables
- leafy greens

Many cruciferous vegetables are rich in nutrients such as vitamin K and folate. Some examples of cruciferous vegetables include:

- cauliflower
- brussels sprouts
- broccoli
- bok choy

Leafy greens are high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Examples of leafy greens include:

- ▶ collard greens
- ▶ spinach
- ▶ beet greens
- ▶ watercress
- ▶ romaine lettuce
- ▶ swiss chard
- ▶ endive
- ▶ turnip greens

Vegetables like kale, cabbage, and arugula fall under both the cruciferous and leafy green categories.

#### Canned and frozen vegetables

It's perfectly O.K. to consume canned or frozen vegetables, as all forms of vegetables count towards your intake. They are convenient and keep for a long time.

However, keep in mind that some canned vegetables may contain added sugars or sodium to help preserve them in the can. Before you use vegetables from a can, consider rinsing them in water to remove this excess sugar and salt. Read the nutrition labels on canned vegetables to choose options with the lowest sodium and added sugar content. You should also try to buy plain frozen vegetables. Some frozen vegetables come mixed in sauces, which are often a hidden source of sodium and added sugar.

#### Tips to eat more vegetables

Here are a few ways you can incorporate more vegetables into your diet for a healthier heart.

#### Meal plan

Planning your meals in advance can help you meet your vegetable intake by ensuring every meal contributes to it. And when you go to the grocery store, you can get everything you need for the week. Instead

# How to eat more vegetables for a healthy heart



#### Make vegetables visible

If you're buying vegetables but find that they go bad before you get to them, switching some things around in your fridge may help prevent this. Instead of storing them in the produce drawer, try moving vegetables to eye level or putting them in the door of your fridge. Then, every time you open the fridge, you will remember that you have them.

The downside of this is that your produce may spoil faster outside of the produce drawers, which can help them stay fresher for longer. An alternative to changing the location of your vegetables is writing down the vegetables you have on a magnetic white board and attaching it to your fridge.

#### Eat vegetables in season

Sopme vegetables are available at all times of the year, but you may find that they are the tastiest while they are in season. They may even be more nutritious compared to when they are out of season. Try varying your meals by incorporating new vegetables every season. Having something new and delicious

to look forward to can keep you motivated to reach your vegetable intake goal.

#### Take it slow

While vegetables like leafy greens and onions may have more heart health benefits than others, if you aren't used to eating enough vegetables in general — or dislike certain ones — it's O.K. to stick to the ones you like at first. Eating the vegetables you enjoy may increase the likelihood that you meet the recommended intake.

Once you are consistently meeting the recommended intake, you can branch out.

#### Takeaway

While all vegetables can support your heart health in some way, vegetables such as onions, kale, spinach, and garlic may provide additional benefits. You can incorporate more heart-healthy vegetables in your diet through meal planning, planning snacks, and rearranging your fridge to make vegetables more visible.

#### Healthline



# Around the world in pictures



▲ The Northern Lights, also called aurora borealis, illuminate the sky in Sturgis, South Dakota.



▲ A Randy Binder smokes a cigarette while waiting for hours in a queue of more than 100 cars at the Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center food distribution site, weeks into the continuing U.S. government shutdown, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



▲ Ceverino Macob, 64, wades through the flood as he recovers a roof blown from his house due to strong winds after Typhoon Fung-wong hit Dagupan City, Pangasinan, Philippines.



▲ Ariana Greenblatt poses as she arrives for the premiere of the new film 'Now You See Me: Now You Don't' in New York City



▲ Faith leader, Michael Woolf, minister at Lake Street Church of Evanston, is detained by Illinois State Police during a protest against immigration actions, outside the Broadview ICE facility in Chicago, Illinois.



# Alcaraz secures ATP Finals showdown with great rival Sinner

CARLOS Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner will face off for the ATP Finals title after tennis' two biggest stars cruised into the final of the prestigious season-ending tournament on Saturday.

Alcaraz, already confirmed year-end world No 1, cruised past Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-2, 6-4 in Turin to set up the title match all tennis fans wanted to see after a series of thrilling battles between the pair this year.

The Spaniard has had the better of his clashes with Sinner 10-5, and has won four of this season's five meetings which have all come in the final of top-level tournaments.

Alcaraz triumphed in the finals of the US Open and Roland Garros, the latter after roaring back from two sets down and saving three match points.

However Sinner, a 7-5, 6-2 winner over Alex de Minaur earlier on Saturday, became the first Italian to win Wimbledon by overcoming Alcaraz and the pair have shared the four Grand Slams this season.

"It's going to be pretty difficult. The level we could play is really, really high, every time we face each other, I think we raise our level to the top," said Alcaraz on court.

Sunday's final has extra spice due to Alcaraz pipping Sinner to the top spot in the men's rankings at the end of 2025 and him contesting his 11th final of the season in front of a partisan Italian crowd.

"Well, I expect at least three or four people in the crowd cheering for me," joked Alcaraz.

"Obviously the people are going to be cheering for him but I will try to be really,



▲ Carlos Alcaraz.

really focused on my game and on the things that I have to do."

Canada's Auger-Aliassime is an indoor specialist, having won seven of his eight titles on indoor courts but even he could not handle Alcaraz who took control of the match by breaking serve in game four of the first set with a brilliant hooked volley.

Alcaraz breezed into a one-set lead with

another break of serve and then completed his victory without much difficulty and without having to play his most spectacular tennis.

## SINNER AWAITS

Sinner has yet to drop a service game but will have a much tougher test against Alcaraz after the second seed racked up his 13th straight win over De Minaur.

"Honestly every matchup (with Alcaraz) is different. We saw it in Rome and Paris, even if it's the same surface (clay), it can change," said Sinner.

"Another final, has been an amazing year for me. I'm looking forward to tomorrow... Also to see for me where my level really is but at the same time it's great before the off-season to have this matchup."

Sinner has won his last 18 sets played in Turin and the four-time Grand Slam champion is on a 30-match winning streak on indoor hard courts.

The 24-year-old has not dropped a set at the ATP Finals since losing the 2023 final to Novak Djokovic, while De Minaur ends his year in a more upbeat mood than the one he had after losing to Lorenzo Musetti in the group stage.

De Minaur admitted that he had been in a "dark place" after that loss which almost cost him a place in the last four before he beat Taylor Fritz to set up Saturday's clash with Sinner.

"I had a little shift in perspective. Of course, like, sitting here right now, I feel like I should have finished my Turin campaign having won two matches instead of one," De Minaur told reporters.

De Minaur fought off two break points in the opening game of the semifinal but then failed to convert any of the three he carved out in Sinner's first service game.

The Australian resisted again when Sinner threatened to break in the seventh and ninth games, but the second seed eventually struck the key blow at 5-5 and snatched the first set. **(Supersport)**

## Khumalo bemoans costly error as Amajimbos bow out of World Cup

AMAJIMBOS coach Vela Khumalo bemoaned costly mistakes and loss of concentration after his side's loss to Japan on Saturday.

This comes after the South African Under-17 men's team bowed out of the FIFA U17 World Cup 2025 following a 3-0 defeat to Japan at the Aspire Zone Complex in Doha, Qatar.

Amajimbos dominated the first half of the match, but could not beat the Japanese goalkeeper, who made brilliant saves to deny the likes of Neo Bohloko and Selwyn Stevens.

Japan took the lead through Hiroto Asada in the 48th minute, and Minato Yoshida made it 2-0 eleven minutes later. And Shota Fujii grabbed the third in the 72nd minute to put the game beyond Amajimbos' reach.

"It was a game of two halves – we were in the game in the first half, and we should have taken the three or four chances that we created, but we took the lessons. The second half was more of a mistake from us and they scored, and that opened up the game. But then we lost concentration and they scored two more goals," said Khumalo as quoted by SAFA media.

"To be honest, the boys played well and showed character. I think



▲ Amajimbos coach Vela Khumalo.

the man of the match should be their goalkeeper. We bow and say thank you to the South Africans for the support since we started until now."

Khumalo takes lessons from Japan defeat

Khumalo added that a lot of lessons have been learnt from Amajimbos' journey at this year's FIFA Under-17 World Cup.

"In the World Cup you learn so many things. You learn that even if you can be good on the ball, if you don't know how to use it properly, you'll be punished. Dedication, tactical discipline, doing things at the right time and knowing exact-

ly in which phase one needs to do, will we get better in the next World Cup? Those are the things that one has learnt to say for us to get even further in the tournament next year, what are the things that we need to take from this World Cup, which I have in my notes," added Khumalo.

South Africa joins fellow Africans, Egypt, Zambia, Tunisia and Senegal who were all knocked out on Saturday, while Morocco, Mali, Uganda and Burkina Faso progressed to the Round of 16. Ivory Coast didn't get out of the group.

**(The Citizen)**

## Broos praises 'important player' Mokoena after 50th cap for Bafana

BAFANA BAFANA coach Hugo Broos has paid tribute to midfielder Teboho Mokoena, who marked his 50th international cap in the friendly clash against Zambia this past weekend.

Mokoena pulled off another sterling performance in the middle of the field alongside Sphephelo Sithole before he was replaced by Thabente Mbatha at the break during South Africa's 3-1 victory over Chipolopololo at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Gqeberha on Saturday.

After the game, Broos labelled the Mamelodi Sundowns star one of the 'very important players' for the national team.

"I congratulate him, certainly. It is not everyone who earns 50 caps, and now he will even have even more (in the future). Teboho Mokoena has become one of the most important South African national team players," said Broos.

"Teboho has been with the national team every step of the way since I've been the coach, which means he basically played all 50 of his games with me.

**(The Citizen)**



▲ Teboho Mokoena awarded for 50 caps during the International Friendly match.





## Portugal qualify for 2026 World Cup by thrashing Armenia

**PORTUGAL** crushed Armenia 9-1 without suspended talisman Cristiano Ronaldo to clinch qualification for the 2026 World Cup finals on Sunday.

Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes and Paris Saint-Germain's Joao Neves both scored hat-tricks as Roberto Martinez's side racked up a huge win in Porto to top Group F.

Renato Veiga got the ball rolling for Portugal, with Goncalo Ramos and Francisco Conceicao also on the scoresheet.

After a draw in Hungary in October and a surprise defeat at Ireland on Thursday in which Ronaldo was sent off, Portugal wrapped up qualification at the third attempt in their final group match.

They will compete in a seventh consecutive edition of the World Cup, a tournament which the Euro 2016 champions are yet to win.

With Manchester United midfielder Fernandes playing a key role throughout, Portugal made a quick

start by scoring in the seventh minute.

Fernandes's vicious inswinging free-kick from just outside the left side of the box was pushed onto the post by goalkeeper Henri Avagyan but Veiga was on hand to head home the rebound.

The visitors shocked the hosts by scoring on their first attack to equalise, with Grant-Leon Ranos crossing for Armenia captain Eduard Spertsyan to strike.

However Portugal quickly stepped up a gear and racked up an unassailable lead. Paris Saint-Germain striker Ramos intercepted a back pass and squeezed home his country's second after rounding Avagyan.

Portugal put together a tidy move for their third, with Neves blasting home from the edge of the box after being teed up by Fernandes.

Neves netted a spectacular second with a free-kick which flew into the top right corner, leaving Avagyan with no chance.

Fernandes netted the fifth in first

half stoppage time with a low penalty after Ruben Dias was fouled.

The Manchester United midfielder continued where he left off after the break, slotting home his second after being fed by Ramos.

Fernandes completed his hat-trick from the penalty spot after debutant substitute Carlos Forbs was felled.

Neves followed suit for Portugal's eighth goal, smashing home after Veiga headed Fernandes's cross into his path.

Juventus forward Conceicao added the ninth in stoppage time to seal one of his country's biggest ever victories.

Ireland stunned Hungary with a late winner to triumph 3-2 in the other Group F match and reach the play-offs, with Troy Parrott following up his midweek brace against Portugal with a hat-trick.

(Supersport)

## Kolisi doubles up in Turin with Bok win and dancing cameo at ATP Finals

**SOUTH** African flanker Siya Kolisi thoroughly enjoyed his Saturday in Turin as he captained his side to a win over Italy, then delighted tennis fans at the ATP Finals by dancing in the stands during Carlos Alcaraz's semifinal victory.

Kolisi made his 101st appearance for the Springboks when they overcame an early red card to defeat Italy 32-14 at the Juventus Stadium before making his way across town to take in the season-ending championships second semifinal.

A big tennis fan, Kolisi spoke to both world No 1 Alcaraz and his Canadian opponent Felix Auger-Aliassime at the Inalpi Arena.

Kolisi, who had met Alcaraz in Turin earlier in the week, got the chance on Saturday to meet Auger-Aliassime in person, having previously had contact with the Canadian through social media.

During breaks in the tennis, cameras panned to Kolisi who appeared on the big screens in the arena and the South African rose from his chair, dancing in time to the music and bringing loud cheers from the crowd.



▲ South African flanker Siya Kolisi.

While the Italian players were getting beaten by South Africa in the Turin rain, another Italian, Jannik Sinner, was extending his indoor

hardcourt winning streak to 30 matches by beating Alex de Minaur, and will meet Alcaraz in Sunday's final.

(Supersport)

## McIlroy loses playoff but clinches seventh Race to Dubai title

**RORY** McIlroy lost the week-long \$10 million DP World Tour Championship on Sunday in a playoff against Matt Fitzpatrick, but did enough to ensure he was crowned the winner of the season-long Race to Dubai champion.

"It's absolutely incredible. I knew I still had a bit of work to do to get over the line in the Race to Dubai," said McIlroy, who will remain the world No2. McIlroy topped the European tour's season ending rankings for a seventh time, and for the fourth season in a row.

He broke a tie with Severiano Ballesteros and is one behind Colin Montgomerie, who achieved the feat eight times.

"It seems within touching distance now," said McIlroy. "I was the first European to win the Grand Slam and I'd love to be the most successful European in terms of winning Order of Merits and season-long races."

He added that Ballesteros "was always my dad's favourite player".

"When I hear Seve, it just sort of brings me back through my whole journey in the game, and yeah, it's quite emotional."

Englishman Fitzpatrick made a birdie on the 72nd hole of regulation play to finish with a 66 at the Earth course of Jumeirah Golf Estates.

A few minutes later, Northern Ireland's McIlroy sensationally eagled the same hole after a brilliant second shot to 16 feet.

On the first playoff hole, McIlroy's drive found the stream that crosses the fairway, and could only make a bogey, leaving Fitzpatrick a third-time winner of the season-ending tournament.

Fitzpatrick, the 2022 US Open champion, kept his nerve for his third DP World Tour Championship title and a 10th DP World Tour victory in 195 starts.

**'THIS MEANS THE WORLD'**

Until he finished tied eighth in the PGA Championship in May, he did not have a top-10 for nearly 11 months.

"This means the world," said Fitzpatrick, who picked up two-and-half points as Europe won the Ryder Cup in September.

"Struggled at the start of this year, obviously, and to turn it around in the summer like I did and have a Ryder Cup like I did, it feels like it's hard to top given everything."

"I feel like I really didn't hit one bad shot all day," he said.

Four players – England's Tommy Fleetwood (67) and Laurie Canter (67), Sweden's Ludvig Aberg (66) and Denmark's Rasmus Neergaard-Petersen (68) – tied for third at 17-under par total.

McIlroy, the reigning Masters champion seemed to be motoring along when he made five birdies in his first 11 holes to move ahead by two shots.

A bogey on the 12th hole, where he overshot the green with his approach shot, and another dropped shot on the par-4 16th, where he found a bunker, pulled him back.

After McIlroy's long birdie putt lipped out on the 17th, he was one behind a group of four players.

That became a two-shot deficit when Fitzpatrick made the sixth birdie of his bogey-free round on the 18th.

McIlroy responded with a towering second shot from 234 yards into headwind to 16 feet for his eagle to force the play-off.

England's Marco Penge finished in a tie for 22nd to secure second place in the Race to Dubai.

He led 10 non-exempt players who will get their PGA Tour card for 2026.

(Supersport)



▲ Rory McIlroy.



# Safeguarding is key in sports development

By Sibusiso Masilela

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**AFRICA Youth Safeguarding Chairperson Malebo Ratladi has urged countries to have safeguarding policies.**

The Botswana administrator said this during the Eswatini Gender Equity Forum held on Saturday at Esibayeni Lodge.

“It is important for member countries to have safeguarding policies so that athletes can showcase their talent in a harmonious environment. It is impossible for countries to unearth talent if the athletes are living in an uncondusive environment,” she said.

EOCGA Adam ‘Bomber’ Mthethwa said they are happy to host the seminar in the country.

“We are pleased to once again host the gender equity forum, where we empower women in sports. We believe the move is in line with the national High-performance strategy aimed at propelling the country to glory during major international competitions in the next 10 years,” he said.



▲ Africa safe guarding officer Malebo Ratladi making remarks.

## Pearl commends local female athletes

**ESWATINI Gender Equity Chairperson Pearl Dlamini has commended local female Athletes for their performances during international assignments this year.**

Dlamini said this during the gender equity forum hosted by the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association on Saturday.

“We are happy with the performance of female athletes this year during international competitions. We urge them to continue working hard and want to see more females joining the various sporting codes,” she said.

Dlamini also lamented the decrease in female administrators in the various Associations.

“We are worried about the decline of female administrators in positions and have requested the member associations to assist us in addressing the issue,” she said.

Some of the outstanding female athletes include Hayley Hoy (Swimming), Bongiwe Mahlalela (Athletics), Lamulela Magagula (Judo), and Nonhle Maduma (Taekwondo), among others.



▲ Eswatini Football Association head of youth development Sicelo Nene also attended the event.

Eswatini will compete in two major competitions before the end of the year, such as the ANOCA youth games and African Taekwondo Union series finals scheduled for Angola and the Ivory coast, respectively.

The seminar also featured several guest speakers from SWAGGA and Eswatini Environmental Authority, to mention a few.



▲ Delegates during the EOCGA gender Equity workshop at Esibayeni Lodge on Saturday.



▲ Delegates following proceedings during the event.



▲ ESRC Women commission Chairperson Fisiwe Vilane following proceedings with EOCGA Vice president Zakhele Dlamini.



▲ Eswatini Athletes commission chairperson Sibusiso Matsenjwa following proceedings.

## Zenzi Hadzebe snatch Previc's November mug

By Sibusiso Masilela

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**GOLFER Zenzi Hadzebe is the King of the November Previc Golf Challenge.**

Hadzebe netted 42 points to beat fellow golfers to the title of the annual Lubombo monthly mug held on Saturday at Mananga country club.

The champion was followed by Sinnet Dlamini while Mzwandile Mamba rounded off the podium with 38 points.

The novelty section saw seasoned golfer Valentine Maziya win the longest drive, while Lamson Matsebula and Sandile Dlamini were Nearest to the pin 2/11 and 5/14 winners.

Previc Investment director Mangaliso Masilela said they are happy with the proceedings of the tournament.

“Kudos to the champion for the success. We thank golfers for attending the competition in numbers. We will continue supporting the tournament as a way of giving back to the community,” he said.

### Previc Results

1. Zenzi Hadebe – 42 points.
2. Sinnet Dlamini – 39 points.
3. Mzwandile Mamba – 38 points.
4. Fikile Mdluli – 37 points.
5. Valentine Maziya – 36 points.

### Novelties

Nearest 2/11 – Lamson Mathebula.  
Nearest 5/14 – Sandile Dlamini.  
Longest drive – Valentine Maziya.



▲ EOCGA women commission Pearl Dlamini leading a debate session during the event.



BUILD IT U13s:

E10k bursary for ‘Nyandoro’s son

By Chris Dlamini

LIKE father, like son. That is just how one can simply describe gifted youngster Simphiwe ‘Ngoro’ Tsabedze’s talent and early childhood achievements inside the field of play.

Son to former Mbabane Highlanders and Young Buffaloes midfielder Mphile ‘Nyandoro’ Tsabedze, the youngster featured for Manzini Build it Under-13 team in the Build it Under-13 Soccer Tournament 2025 National Finals on Saturday.

This was at Somhlolo National Stadium, Lobamba, where some schools, particularly Lobamba National High and Kobwe Primary and High, pitched to support the youngsters from all over the country. Eight teams competed for the title, with Mbabane coming in as defending champions this time.

Tsabedze was amazing to watch in the middle of the park, commanding it verbally and imposed himself with great aplomb, leading with ease as he won duels, distributed inch-perfect passes that saw them outfox Mbabane in the final to lift the title this year.

Tsabedze’s team won the final 4-1 as they were just a little too much for a tired-looking Mbabane. The two had clashed earlier on the day in the group stage.

Manzini lost the match 4-3 after letting Mbabane bounce back to win it.

For all the work, leadership, and great football the young Ngoro displayed, he was rewarded with the main prize of the tournament, the E10 000 bursary to take care of his education. He further won the Best Midfielder Award. His mother came just in time to get a picture with his heroic son and his Player of the Tournament and Best Midfielder gongs, including the E10 000 bursary replica cheque.

“My parents support me, and I want to play at the top level like my father one day,” said the youngster.

On top of his awards and bursary, he also received two sports kit bags, each with a pair of soccer boots inside it. Meanwhile, his mother encouraged other parents to support their gifted children and allow them to go play soccer but also give them support and courage to put school work first.

Manzini sweeps the boards

It was not just about the title and their shining star Simphiwe ‘Ngoro’ Tsabedze for the champions, Manzini.

Yes, winning as a team was the ultimate goal, and it was well achieved. However, the team also swept every award on offer on the day. Their captain scooped the big one, but they all come just equally honourable to their winners. Tsabedze saw some of his teammates also get just as decorated for their efforts.

Manzini took the best goalkeeper, top Goalscorer, and the best Defender awards. The Best Goalkeeper gong went to Mhlelisi Manana, Top Goalscorer to Bandile Ntibane, and Best Defender was taken by Senzo Gadlela.

The trio took home a pair of soccer boots each plus a sports kit bag, which was handed to their coaches for every player in the eight teams.

The youngsters were watched by Eswatini



▲Simphiwe ‘Ngoro’ Tsabedze displaying prizes with his mother.



▲2025 Build it Under 13 champions Manzini in a jovial mood after their success on Saturday at Somhlolo National Stadium.

legendary goalkeeper William ‘Cool Cat’ Shongwe who is a highly respected Kaizer Chiefs legend and a SuperSport TV analyst and commentator, Eswatini Football Association (EFA) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Frederick Mngomezulu, EFA Technical Director (TD) Boy ‘Bizzah’ Mkhonta, Commerce Director Meluleki Dlamini, and Build it Regional Director Trys Wentzel who presented the main prize which is the educational bursary of E10 000 among others. Build it came all out with their top brass, including Brand and Equity Manager Les Pillay.

Winners and prizes:

- 1. Manzini Build it - Trophy and 20 gold medals
- 2. Mbabane Build it - Trophy and 20 silver medals

Individual Awards:

- 1. Top Goalscorer - Bandile Ntibane (Manzini) - 5 goals): Soccer boots
- 2. Player of the Tournament - Simphiwe Tsabedze (Manzini): E10 000 bursary, award trophy, soccer boots
- 3. Best Midfielder - Simphiwe Tsabedze (Manzini) - Soccer boots
- 4. Best Goalkeeper - Mhlelisi Manana (Manzini) - Soccer boots
- 5. Best Defender - Senzo Gadlela (Manzini): Soccer boots



▲Runners-up Mbabane pick team receiving their prize.



▲Coaches receiving their bags after the tournament.



By Sibusiso Masilela  
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(Courtesy of Century Fashions)

ANOTHER GOOD AWAY RUN...  
Nsingizini ‘muddy’  
Mangosuthu Cup champs

A rain-soaked 2025 Mangosuthu Legacy Cup it was!

In the final of the annual tournament at the Ulundi Regional Stadium, Eswatini MTN Premier League defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs faced off with South Africa’s (SA) Betway Premiership outfit AmaZulu. However, it was rather a cold, as was the weather ending for the fans who braved the wet and chilly Sunday.

The final could not take off due to bad weather. Consequently, the two finalists, Nsingizini Hotspurs and AmaZulu, ended up sharing the title - they are joint champions.

The Mangosuthu Legacy Cup organisers reached the decision to declare both finalists as joint champions after considering the weather conditions and unplayable pitch conditions.

Before this decision, Insingizi Yezulu (Nsingizini) had earlier on edged SA’s second-tier outfit Richards Bay with a 6-5 margin after a penalty shootout. It was goalless at full-time, and the match was decided in the shootout.

The Richards Bay result was the second consecutive one after the incredible goalless draw with Tanzania’s Simba SC away in Tanzania in the TotalEnergies CAF Champions League 2025/26 edition. Insingizi is already out of the Champions League but with a flicker of hope for a group stage comeback after filing a complaint.

Meanwhile, Nsingizini will be returning home to midweek action in the MTN Premier League against tricky rivals Malanti Chiefs at Killarney Stadium, Pigg’s Peak on Wednesday at 3pm.



▲ Nsingizini’s Ayanda Gadlela in action during their 2025 Prince Mangosuthu Legacy Cup match against Richards Bay FC at Ulundi Regional Stadium, South Africa. Nsingizini won 6-5 during penalty shoot out.



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs celebrate after their victory against Richards Bay FC.



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs fans ecstatic during the game.

Resigned Bull director tipped for Patron’s structure

By Sibusiso Masilela  
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RESIGNED Mbabane Highlanders Director Fortune Nxumalo is set to join the Patrons.

Nxumalo recently stepped down as a board member in the Shauwn Mkhize-led board.

The local businessman cited church commitments as part of the reasons behind his exit. He is the son of the club’s late Patron Vusi Nxumalo and joined the board structure about three months ago after Mkhize took over.

Nxumalo confirmed the latest news.

“I have been approached to join the Patrons, and nothing has been finalised. I will forever be a Highlanders person, and I have stepped aside because of Church commitments,” he said.

Patrons Vice Chairman Moses Dlamini said they were on a mission to strengthen the structure.

“We are looking to add more members to the Patrons, and several individuals have been earmarked to join us,” he said.

Nxumalo left the team sitting at position seven in the MTN Premier League log standings with eight points after six matches following the shocking 1-0 defeat to Sisonkhe

FC on Friday at Mavuso Sports Centre.

Mkhize joined the capital city giants after Betway’s premiership status before the end of last season due to an E40 million debt with the South African Revenue Service (SARS).

Mkhize was previously linked with Moneni Pirates, and she was part of the ‘Sea Robbers’ guests during the SMVAF Ingwenyama Cup finals against Royal Leopard.

The KwaZulu-Natal-born director is the second South African businessperson to lead Highlanders after Tshwane-based politician Chief Ally Kgomongwe.

Footsteps

She has become the first female leader of the capital city giants.

She has followed in the footsteps of the late Busi Dlamini in the list of female leaders of Premier League clubs.

The late Dlamini oversaw the defunct Red Lions FC.

She has beefed up the squad with various players such as Siphiwo Cele, Innocent Adja, Linda Nkambule, Siboniso Shiba, and Msimisi Fakudze, among others.

The flamboyant KwaZulu-Natal businesswoman further roped in former Green Mamba head coach and Ernest Mavuso.

Mavuso is also Sihlangu’s interim assistant coach.



► Fortune Nxumalo.

MRFA games washed away

By Sibusiso Masilela  
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THE ongoing, persistent rains around the country have halted the operations of the Manzini Regional Football Association.

This follows the indefinite postponement of the Regional associations fixtures scheduled for Sunday due to inclement weather.

Acting Chief Operations Officer Muzi Mtsetfwa confirmed the latest news through a press statement.

“We have decided to cancel the weekend games due to inclement weather in fear of the players’ safety due to unplayable and waterlogged pitches. We will announce the revised fixtures in due course,” he said.

The Association recently launched a two-year Hydration sponsorship with Viva Beverages.

MRFA is set to construct a Technical Centre at Nkonga through the FIFA Forward program.

The project was endorsed by EFA President Peter ‘Samora’ Simelane last Season.





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... Reigning league champions joint champions of annual Mangosuthu Legacy Cup with SA's Betway premiership side, AmaZulu FC after final failed to take off due to inclement weather. **Page 23**