



DPM attends Africa
Pre-Commission
on Women’s Status
meeting

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The work is bigger than me
— Nothando Hlophe

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Minister urges farmers to utilise E7mln subsidy ... amid favourable rainfall

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THE government has introduced a E7 million subsidy targeted at maize and bean farmers, a move the Minister for Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka believes will significantly boost food production. Tshawuka said the subsidy aims to ease the financial burden on farmers while helping them expand their fields and improve yields. He described the subsidy as an important investment that will return multiple benefits for the country in both the short and long term.

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DPM calls for stronger protection of women, children in digital spaces

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▲ Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka during the meeting.

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THE government has introduced a E7 million subsidy targeted at maize and bean farmers, a move the Minister for Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka believes will significantly boost food production.

Tshawuka said the subsidy aims to ease the financial burden on farmers while helping them expand their fields and improve yields. He described the subsidy as an important investment that will return multiple benefits for the country in both the short and long term.

The Minister encouraged farmers to apply for the subsidy without delay and to make full use of the assistance provided.

He said the support is specifically designed for essential crops such as maize and beans because these are the backbone of the national diet.

Minister urges farmers to utilise E7mln subsidy ... amid favourable rainfall

According to him, the country has been spending millions every year importing grain that could have easily been produced locally if farmers were adequately supported and motivated.

He also reminded citizens that food crops like maize and beans are not only consumed at the household level but also feed various industries including livestock and food processing sectors.

Strengthening the production of these crops therefore strengthens entire value chains that contribute to economic growth.

Tshawuka added that when farmers produce on a large scale, local markets become stronger and food prices remain stable.

The subsidy comes at a time when many farmers are still recovering from the impact of climate variability.

The Minister said support will assist in rebuilding confidence within the sector and encourage more emaSwati to view agriculture as a viable business rather than a survival activity.

He noted that the global economic climate has made food imports more expen-

sive, which further validates the need for the country to invest heavily in its own agricultural systems.

He once again repeated his call for farmers to take advantage of the current rain, saying they create perfect conditions for planting.

He encouraged farmers in all four regions to expand their fields and use the available government support to maximise productivity. The Minister expressed optimism that if farmers respond positively, the country will see a major improvement in crop yields with- in the next harvest season.

DPM heads to Ethiopia for Africa Pre-Commission on Women's Status meeting

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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DEPUTY Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla has embarked on an important diplomatic mission, departing Eswatini for Ethiopia to participate in the Ministerial Session of the Africa Pre-Commission on the Status of Women 70 Consultation (Pre-CSW70).

This high-level gathering represents a critical step in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across the African continent.

The Pre-CSW70 meeting brings together ministers and senior officials from African member states to review and share progress made in promoting women's rights, while also identifying persistent challenges and gaps that hinder full gender equality. The session aims to foster strategic, collective

approaches that will strengthen efforts to enhance women's opportunities and well-being throughout Africa.

During the consultation, member states will engage in comprehensive discussions on a range of issues affecting women, including economic empowerment, political participation, access to education and healthcare, and the elimination of gender-based violence. These deliberations are designed to build a unified African voice and strategy that can effectively influence global policy frameworks.

One of the key objectives of the Pre-CSW70 session is to deliberate and finalise Africa's common position in preparation for the 70th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70). Scheduled to take place from 9 to 20 March 2026 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the CSW70 is a pivotal global platform for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide.



▲ Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla.

By Thokozani Mazibuko

MINISTER for Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka has called on the nation to take seriously the urgent need to improve local food production, warning that no country can sustainably depend on imported food.

He explained that for Eswatini to achieve true food security, it must strengthen its own agricultural capacity. Speaking during a Phezukomkhono programme engagement, the Minister highlighted that food imports expose the country to unpredictable global markets and foreign price shocks. These conditions often translate into higher food prices for citizens, threatening national stability and household survival.

According to the Minister, the country is blessed with fertile land and a hardworking population capable of producing enough food to feed the nation. He urged both new and experienced farmers to intensify their efforts, especially in the current planting

Eswatini must end reliance on food imports

season which comes at a time when the country has been receiving encouraging rainfall. He emphasised that the rain must not go to waste and encouraged farmers to plant maize and beans which are among the most consumed staple foods in the country.

The Minister reminded citizens that the responsibility to feed the nation cannot be left to the government alone. Instead, it should be a joint effort where farmers, communities and the state work together. He said this collaborative approach can help Eswatini move from dependency to agricultural resilience. He stressed that producing food locally also helps preserve the dignity of the nation by reducing foreign reliance and boosting national pride.



▲ Minister for Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



▲ Acting Deputy Prime Minister Sikhumbuzo Dlamini with relevant stakeholders at the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence official launch.



▲ Acting Deputy Prime Minister Sikhumbuzo Dlamini.

DPM calls for stronger protection of women, children in digital spaces

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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DEPUTY Prime Minister has issued an emphatic call to the nation to fortify Eswatini’s digital environment, urging communities, institutions, and policymakers to take decisive action against online abuse targeting women and children.

Minister of Tinkhundla Administration and Development Sikhumbuzo Dlamini was the emissary to the Deputy Prime Minister Thuli Dladla at the official launch of the 2025 edition of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, held at Royal Villas. This year’s theme, “End Digital Violence Against All Women and Children,” signals a strong shift of focus toward the rapidly evolving landscape of abuse in the digital sphere.

In his keynote address, the DPM emphasised that technology, while a powerful enabler of communication, education, and economic growth, has simultaneously created new frontiers where violence is perpetrated with increasing sophistication and anonymity.

“Let us acknowledge that as technology becomes embedded in daily life, it has opened new avenues for violence, including online abuse, cyberbullying, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, digital stalking, and harassment,” said Dlamini, noting that these forms of abuse often leave victims isolated, fearful, and psychologically traumatised.

He further stressed that combating digital violence must extend beyond awareness campaigns and should include strengthening national laws, ensuring that enforcement systems are fit for the digital age, and empowering survivors with accessible and safe avenues for reporting.

“The 16 Days of Activism remind us that ending violence is not the task of the government alone,” he said. “It requires the collective determination of every *liSwati*, every family, every community, every institution, and every partner. Together, we can end digital violence. Together, we can end all forms of abuse. Together, we can build a safer Eswatini for this generation and the next.”

The ADPM anchored his message in sobering data drawn from the National Surveillance Survey on Violence, a key instrument in monitoring trends and informing national responses.

The statistics, he said, paint a troubling picture:

- In 2024, Eswatini documented 14,335 cases of violence across various categories.
- Between January and June 2025 alone, 8 859 cases have already been recorded.

These figures, Dlamini highlighted, demonstrate that traditional forms of abuse remain deeply entrenched in society, even as digital violence grows in scale and complexity. The combination, he warned, creates a dual crisis that demands urgent and multifaceted intervention. He reiterated the necessity of empowering survivors, stating, “Let us empower survivors with the knowledge, tools, and safe platforms to seek help without fear or judgment.”

The ADPM’s message further emphasised three core pillars for national response:

1. Education and Awareness

Communities, schools, families, and institutions must be equipped with information about online risks, safe digital practices, and early detection of cyber-based abuse. Digital literacy, he noted, should now be considered a fundamental life skill.

2. Legislation and Enforcement

In a world where digital crimes cross borders and often involve complex technological evidence, Eswatini must modernise regulatory frameworks to ensure perpetrators are held accountable. Strengthening forensic capabilities and enhancing collaboration between law enforcement and cyber experts were also identified as essential steps.

3. Survivor Support Systems

Safe reporting channels, psychosocial support, confidentiality guarantees, and survivor-centred digital platforms must be prioritised to encourage victims to come forward without fear of retaliation or stigma.

The launch was attended by a broad coalition of partners, reflecting the collaborative spirit required to confront gender-based violence in all its forms. Present at the event were representatives from the European Union in Eswatini, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Eswatini, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Eswatini, the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA), the SOS Children’s Villages Eswatini, along with several civil society organisations, community leaders, and advocacy groups. Each year, from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence unite people worldwide in a call for solidarity to end violence against women and girls everywhere. Violence against women remains a critical public health and human rights crisis, affecting nearly one in three women at some point in their lives. The risks are even greater in situations involving humanitarian emergencies, climate vulnerability, and poverty. Behind every number is a woman or girl whose health, safety, and fundamental rights have been severely violated. Despite its prevalence, violence against women is preventable. Around the globe, communities are confronting harmful gender norms, governments are enhancing laws and policies, and health systems are expanding care and support services for survivors. This year’s campaign spotlights the latest 2023 estimates on violence against women, released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on behalf of the UN Violence Against Women Inter-Agency Working Group on Estimation and Data (VAW-IAWGED). It also introduces the second edition of the RESPECT women prevention framework, launching on November 19.

‘The work is bigger than me’

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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ESWATINI’S celebrated gospel artist Nothando Hlophe has described her ministry as “a calling far greater than self,” saying the gospel “is bigger than me” following her remarkable continental honour at the prestigious 18th Crown Gospel Music Awards held in Durban on Sunday.

Hlophe, who received the ‘Best of Africa’ award in front of a packed and electrified audience at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC), said the recognition had deeply moved her and reaffirmed her purpose in gospel music. In an exclusive interview with this publication, she emphasised that this accolade has renewed her commitment to serving, creating, and uplifting.

“This award has reignited my fire,” she said. “It reminds me that the work is bigger than me. I feel inspired to dream even bigger and to pour more of myself into the next season of music, ministry, and impact.”

Hlophe, who has steadily become one of Eswatini’s most influential gospel voices, described the announcement of her name as the winner as an experience she is still processing. “When I heard my name being called, I was overwhelmed,” she stated. “It felt unreal for a moment. I just kept thinking about how far God has brought me, and how every tear, every prayer, and every sacrifice was worth it. My heart was full of gratitude.”

Her reaction, she said, was not just personal but spiritual. Far from viewing it as a personal triumph alone, the artist insisted that the award was a testament to divine guidance and the collective

support system that has held her up throughout her career.

The Crown Gospel Music Awards, now in their 18th edition, have grown into one of Africa’s foremost platforms for honouring excellence in gospel music. With more than 30 top-tier gospel artists, industry leaders, and continental stakeholders in attendance, the event is known for its iconic red carpet, its dazzling stagecraft, and its ability to merge faith with glamour in a uniquely African expression.

For Nothando Hlophe, receiving such an award at such an esteemed platform is more than symbolic, it is historic. “To me, this award says that Eswatini’s voice matters on the continental stage,” she said. “It shows that Africa is paying attention to our sound, our worship, and our stories. It’s a reminder that gospel music from smaller nations also carries a big anointing and big impact.”

Throughout the interview, Hlophe repeatedly emphasised her gratitude to her supporters, acknowledging the critical role they’ve played in her artistic and spiritual evolution. “My fans have carried me through seasons they don’t even know about,” she said earnestly. “Their messages, their prayers, their belief in my ministry, all of that kept me going. This award is not mine alone; it belongs to every person who streamed, voted, shared, prayed, and stood by me.”

She added that the journey to attaining such recognition is rarely straightforward, and without a solid support system, many artists would crumble under pressure. In addition to her fans, Nothando Hlophe highlighted her immediate support structure, the group of individuals who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure her success.

“I am surrounded by people who constantly push me to become better,” she explained. “My family grounds me, my team protects the vision, and my mentors guide me spiritually and creatively. They are the pillars behind the scenes, and without them, moments like this wouldn’t be possible.”

She described her journey as one built not on individual effort but on collective sacrifice. Every performance, every recording, and every milestone are collaborative accomplishments, she noted. For the growing number of young gospel hopefuls in Eswatini, Nothando Hlophe offered a message of courage, resilience, and unwavering faith.

“Don’t dim your light just because you come from a small country,” she said. “Your gift is valid. Your sound is needed. Keep working, keep praying, and stay true to your calling. God will make room for you.” With her new accolade, Nothando Hlophe said she intends to use her elevated platform not for personal elevation alone but to further champion gospel music

across borders. “I want to continue creating music that heals, restores, and reminds people of God’s faithfulness,” she said. “I also want to collaborate more across Africa and open doors for other Eswatini artists to shine on bigger platforms.”

Her vision includes fostering cross-border collaborations, advocating for stronger industry structures, and creating opportunities for artists who may not yet have access to continental recognition. “We need stronger industry structures, marketing support, funding for production, radio and TV partnerships, and platforms that invest in artist development,” she said. “With the right support, Eswatini gospel can travel far beyond our borders.”

Beyond awards and events, Nothando Hlophe is also cementing her legacy in the digital space. Her song “Methodist Medley,” part of her 2025 album *A New Dawn*, has amassed more than 2.9 million views on YouTube, becoming one of her most impactful gospel releases to date. The track has resonated deeply with listeners for its authenticity, its spiritual depth, and its stirring arrangement.

The album *A New Dawn*, launched on June 7, 2025, at a vibrant event at the Mavuso Trade Centre, has continued to grow in popularity. Another track, “Sithumela Wena,” has surpassed 774,000 YouTube views, indicating the strength of Hlophe’s reach and the continental appetite for her sound. ‘A New Dawn’ album is produced by Genesis Ekucaleni Media, a media company founded by the pioneering Senator Pholile Shakantu, who is also known for her iconic work on the Eswatini film “BakaNgwane”. Collaborating with Genesis Ekucaleni Media is the talented Lokuhle Media Group, spearheaded by renowned music producer Phindokuhle Sithole. Eswatini Mobile was the main sponsor of the live recording event.



▲ Nothando Hlophe after winning the Best Of Africa award the Crowns.



By Delisa Magagula

ACTING Ludzidzini Governor Themba Ginindza has confirmed that the Bantfu Bemanti have officially been commissioned, marking the beginning of one of the most sacred and closely guarded cultural cycles in the Eswatini calendar.

Ginindza said the commissioning took place on Friday, November 21, 2025, signalling the traditional start of preparations for Incwala, the annual national ceremony of kingship and renewal. Speaking from Ludzidzini, Ginindza said the ritual was carried out according to custom and in full respect of the procedures that guide the beginning of Incwala.

He added that once they were dispatched, the bemanti immediately set out on their journey, and the nation should understand what this moment represents. He also confirmed that the team will be out for about a month, as prescribed by custom. Their presence has already been reported in Ezulwini, Lobamba, and as far as Mvutjini, where residents have seen the group moving quietly through homesteads and traditional corridors.

Noteworthy the commissioning of the Bantfu Bemanti marks a sacred shift; it often means that the King has entered seclusion, a confidential and spiritually charged state associated with the early stages of Incwala.

Although the details of the King's activities during this period remain private, tradition holds that the monarch separates himself from the public and certain daily routines in preparation for the ceremony's climax.

Once commissioned, Bantfu Bemanti embarks on a journey across the country and beyond, collecting sacred water from specific rivers and, historically, from the ocean. This water is carried in traditional vessels that are treated with reverence, as it forms part of the purification rituals performed later in the Incwala process. Anthropologists and traditional historians note that the bemanti embody more than physical movement; they represent transitions of power,

Bemanti commissioned



▲ Commissioning of the Bantfu Bemanti marks a sacred shift; it often means that the King has entered seclusion, a confidential and spiritually charged state associated with the early stages of Incwala.

spiritual cleansing, and the renewal of the nation.

Their journey is understood to gather water that connects the King to the land, the ancestors, and the natural elements that sustain life. In many homesteads, families honour the arrival of Bantfu Bemanti by offering small contributions or hosting them according to custom. The tail of a slaughtered beast is often tied to their water container, a mark of respect and a blessing upon the mission.

"Their movement through various communities is also significant because it serves as a living announcement: Incwala is approaching. In places like Ezulwini and Lobamba, people recognise their presence as the earliest public sign that the nation is entering a sacred period," said Ginindza.

In addition, he said in Mvutjini, some residents described how the group passed through in the early hours, calling out according to their ritual practice. Their appearance sets in motion weeks of preparation for the regiments, chiefs, and royal homes.

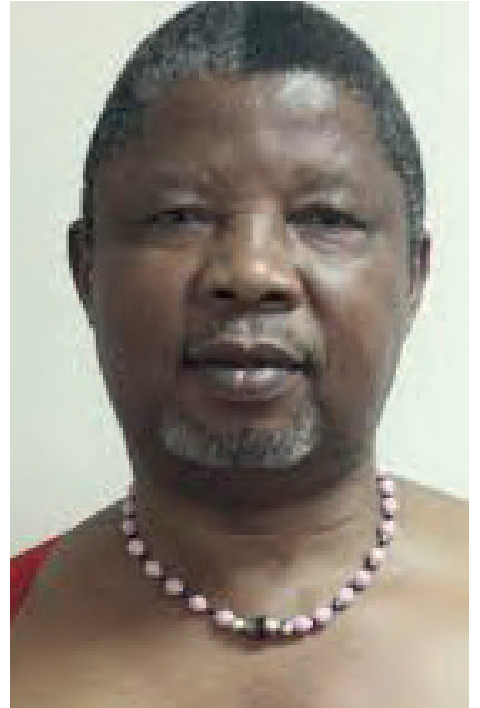
Worth noting, Incwala itself is often called the First Fruits Ceremony, but elders and cultural custodians consistently stress that the ceremony's true essence is kingship, not agriculture. It is the moment when the King renews his spiritual strength, re-aligns him-

self with the ancestors, and ritually opens the nation for the year ahead. This is why the ceremony cannot be held without the King; his presence is the anchor of the entire ritual.

Once the Bemanti return with the sacred water, the first stage of the ceremony, known as Little Incwala, begins. This phase includes controlled rituals inside the royal kraal, singing, dancing, and the preparation of traditional beer under strict guidelines. It is during this period that the King interacts symbolically with the water collected by the Bemanti, beginning the slow build-up to the larger event.

Two weeks later, young unmarried men are tasked with cutting the lusekwane, a type of thorny bush believed to hold protective and purifying power. These branches are taken to the royal residence to construct or reinforce the sacred enclosure known as the inhlambelo. No married man may handle the lusekwane, and the journey itself is highly regulated. The regiments move at night, guided by the moon, under the watch of traditional leaders who ensure the purity of the participants.

The climax of Incwala, known as Big Incwala, spans several days and is characterised by intense ritual performance. The King



▲ Acting Ludzidzini Governor Themba Ginindza.

appears in full traditional regalia, performing dances and movements that are understood only by the royal houses and cultural custodians. Regiments from all over the country converge on the capital to dance, chant, and participate in symbolic cleansing acts. One of the most significant moments is when a sacred gourd is thrown and caught with a shield, a gesture believed to seal the ritual year and usher the nation into a new spiritual cycle.

In the final stages, the 'Day of the Log' brings the regiments together to gather firewood used to burn certain ritual objects. This act is symbolic of discarding the old year, releasing accumulated impurity, and preparing the King and the nation for renewal. Once this is done, the King returns to seclusion for a period before the lusekwane branches are burned, signalling the closing of the ceremony.

Four arrested as Mliba Police intensify fight against stock theft

By Thokozeni Mazibuko

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service has recorded a breakthrough in its ongoing effort to curb stock theft following the arrest of four men found in possession of three cattle carcasses valued at sixty thousand emalangen.

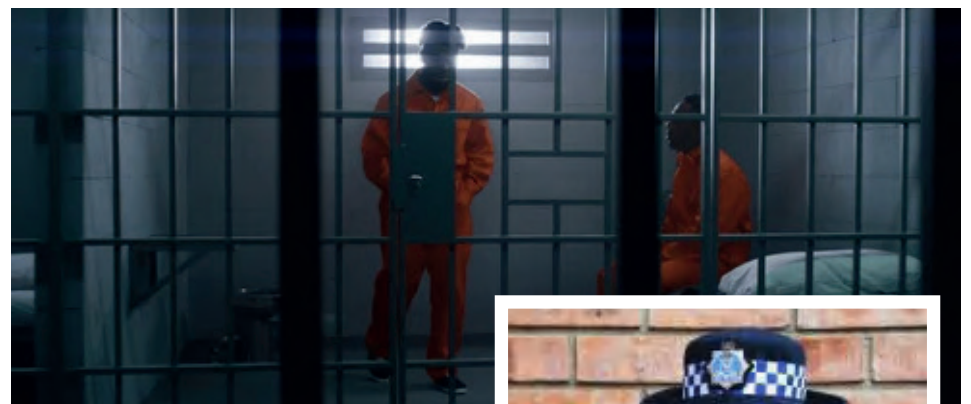
The arrests were made on November 23, 2025, at about half past eleven in the morning at a farm in the Zandondo area. The suspects, aged 41, 37, 24, and 34, come from Nkijji, kaBhekinkhosi, Mafutseni and Ludlawini, respectively.

According to a statement issued by the Royal Eswatini Police Service through its official Facebook page, the four were caught red-handed soon after slaughtering the stolen cattle. Preliminary investigations revealed that the 24-year-old suspect from Mafutseni and the 34-year-old suspect from Ludlawini were employees at one of the farms in Zandondo. Police believe the two insiders colluded with the other two suspects, who acted as buyers to steal cattle from a neighbouring farm. After leading the animals away from the kraal, the group slaughtered them and loaded the carcasses into a box truck believed to have been prepared for quick transportation.

The suspects then proceeded to a nearby river to dispose of evidence and clean the offal. However, their movements attracted attention. A community member spotted them washing the offal in the river and became suspicious of their activities. The witness raised an alarm, which immediately mobilised members of the Umbutfo Eswatini Defence Force stationed in the area. The soldiers responded swiftly and found the four men still at the river with the remains of the slaughtered cattle.

The suspects were detained and handed over to officers from the Royal Eswatini Police Service, who arrived shortly thereafter. A closer inspection confirmed that the carcasses belonged to three cows stolen from a farm in the vicinity. Police officers also noted that the suspects could not produce any stock removal permit, which is a legal requirement for transporting livestock. Instead, they claimed to have purchased the cattle, and the justification police dismissed due to the absence of documentation and the suspicious circumstances under which they were found.

Police investigators have indicated that more charges may be brought against the four as the inquiry continues. The statement revealed that the past week has seen another case reported in Ekutsimuleni where three cattle valued at E34,000 were stolen and slaughtered while grazing. Authorities are



probing possible links between the two incidents to determine whether the same group or a wider network is involved.

Stock theft remains a major concern for farmers across the country as it affects food security and livelihoods. Many farmers depend on cattle for income and sustenance, and they have long requested stronger policing and community support in dealing with the crime. The quick response from members of the defence force and the cooperation shown by residents in reporting suspicious activity was commended by police, who highlighted the importance of public vigilance in protecting livestock.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service further encouraged communities to continue working closely with law enforcement agencies by reporting any suspected cases of stock



▲ Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni.

theft. They reiterated that criminal syndicates often rely on inside information and swift coordination, and therefore, community involvement is vital in disrupting their operations. Police also warned the public to avoid purchasing meat or livestock without proper documents, as doing so fuels the illegal trade. The four suspects remain in police custody and are expected to appear tomorrow at the Mliba circuit court.

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry for Economic Planning and Development (MEPD) has invested over E41 million into Sandleni and Mtsambama infrastructure, including the E8 million Dlomodlomo Low-Level Crossing, a flagship achievement over two years.

This is according to a communiqué shared by the Ministry on their social media platforms. According to the communiqué, the Dlomodlomo crossing, located in Sandleni, Shiselweni, forms part of a broader E41 million infrastructure injection by the government, executed through the Microprojects Programme.

These funds have been allocated to Mbokodwane Low-Level Crossing (E7.6 million), Emetamo Low-Level Crossing (E4 million), Gwegwe Mhlabuyaduma Road (E17 million) and Gwegwe Community Hall (E4 million).

This wave of investment marks a concerted effort by the Ministry to restore and strengthen rural connectivity, particularly in areas that have long been disrupted by seasonal flooding. “The Dlomodlomo crossing replaces a vital route that was lost in 1984 due to flooding. The new structure includes reinforced concrete spans and is complemented by a 600-metre stretch of paved concrete road, a design meant to withstand high water and heavy rainfall,” reads the communiqué in part.

For many residents, the new crossing means restored access to essential services, and the community has praised the Government for the infrastructure. “This crossing will change our lives. Before, when the rain came, we were cut off. Now our children can go to school, and families can travel safely even in flood season,” said a community member during a recent handover.

Another voice from the community echoed the sentiment, saying they used to wait for days, sometimes missing funerals or community events because of flooding. With this road, they are no longer isolated.

Meanwhile, officials from Microprojects and Members of Parliament praised the high level of community engagement. Notably, residents contributed 10 per cent of the total project cost, a requirement under the Microprojects model. That investment, MPs said, fostered a strong sense of ownership.

“Your 10 per cent commitment was more than just money; it symbolised that you wanted this project for yourselves. You gave, you cared, and now you will benefit,” said one member of Parliament.

According to official Ministry communications, Dr Tambo Gina, Minister of Economic Planning and Development, has long championed this kind of infrastructure strategy. In a 2024 statement on medium-term growth, he linked public investment, especially in roads, dams, and buildings, to a projected rise in Eswatini’s economic growth.

Dr Gina has also underscored the importance of rural development. During a recent appearance in Parliament, he affirmed that his Ministry would continue to deliver vital resources to underserved communities through microprojects.

His vision is that such infrastructure is not just about concrete and cement but about connecting isolated communities, unlocking economic potential, and raising the standard of living.

Noteworthy for Sandleni, the Dlomodlomo crossing is more than a construction project but a turning point. “It restores physical connectivity, which in turn strengthens social cohesion, supports



▲ The Dlomodlomo low level bridge in Sandleni, Shiselweni that was recently unveiled by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development.

Govt injects E41 million into critical infrastructure

● This wave of investment marks a concerted effort by the Ministry to restore and strengthen rural connectivity, particularly in areas that have long been disrupted by seasonal flooding.



▲ A community member going through her remarks during the unveiling event.

schooling, and boosts economic activity. Families who once hesitated to travel during the rainy season now have safe, reliable access,” said a senior community member.

Meanwhile, the broader E41 million investments across projects in the region underscore the government’s commitment to long-term, resilient development. By blending reinforced structures, paved roads, community input, and ongoing Ministry support, the Microprojects Programme is laying the groundwork for sustainable progress.

Furthermore, Microprojects Programme leadership used the handover event to encourage residents to continue engaging with the Regional Development Fund (RDF). Officials emphasised that the Dlomodlomo crossing is not the culmination, but rather the beginning of a renewed development drive. With community buy-in already demonstrated, the Ministry is optimistic that similar projects can be replicated across other regions.



▲ In an effort to restore and strengthen rural connectivity, the structure provides safe crossing for the community to combat issues of flooding and loss of life due to drowning.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

FAO, Govt train officers in modern apiculture

THE Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), working with the Ministry of Agriculture, has completed a five-day training programme for veterinary and livestock extension officers aimed at strengthening the country's apiculture sector and unlocking its commercial potential. The workshop focused on practical and technical skills needed to support smallholder farmers.

E2bln for African renewables projects

LUANDA — The European Investment Bank (EIB) is pledging more than 2 billion euros (\$2.3 billion) of financing for renewable energy projects on the African continent over the next two years. The projects will include hydroelectric, solar and wind power plants, as well as the expansion and upgrading of transmission and distribution facilities, the bank said in a statement.

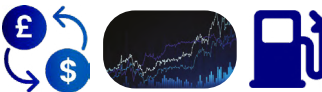
Moz grants 30-year concession to state firms for LNG facilities

CAPE TOWN — Mozambique has granted its top state-owned companies, including national oil firm ENH, a 30-year concession to build and operate natural gas facilities at the Port of Beira and the smaller Inhassoro site, the government said on Monday. Efforts by the Southern African country to develop its oil and gas reserves have been hampered by an ongoing Islamist-linked insurgency in the north of the country that has delayed TotalEnergies' LNG plant, despite some improvements in security.



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	



Govt, private sector tackle work-permit issues

... cite that delays affecting investment

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade held a meeting with Business Eswatini leadership to discuss ongoing economic and regulatory reforms, with both sides agreeing that work-permit delays are now one of the most urgent barriers to investment.

The meeting was attended by Minister Manqoba Khumalo, a team of Directors from the Ministry, Business Eswatini President Mvuselelo Fakudze, and Chief Executive E. Nathi Dlamini.

The session was convened to review progress on the Companies Act amendments, localisation regulations, SEZ Act changes, and the new Immigration Bill, but the most dominant issue raised was the slow processing of work permits.

Business Eswatini told the Ministry that companies, both domestic and foreign owned, were struggling to operate efficiently because of extended waiting periods for key staff approvals. BE President Mvuselelo Fakudze said the delays were affecting capital deployment and slowing down projects across several sectors.

"We have investors who are ready to put money into the economy, but they cannot begin operations without essential personnel. When a work permit takes months instead of weeks, the project stalls and jobs are delayed," he said.

Fakudze said this placed Eswatini at a disadvantage compared to other countries in the region. "Investors compare turnaround times. If our system takes too long, they move their resources elsewhere. We need predictability and efficiency, not shortcuts. Businesses are simply asking for clear timelines," he said.

Meanwhile, BE CEO E. Nathi Dlamini supported this view, saying the complaints brought forward by companies had become routine. "Our members are reporting the same challenge repeatedly. Even when all paperwork is in order, the waiting period becomes lengthy. This affects operational planning and puts pressure on businesses that are already navigating a tough economic environment," he said.

Dlamini added that a quicker and transparent process would send an immediate positive signal to current and potential investors. "A well-functioning work-permit system is not just an administrative issue; it is an investment tool. Improving turnaround times will help position Eswatini as a competitive destination," he said.

The Government acknowledged the delays and outlined corrective measures. Minister Manqoba Khumalo said the government recognised the concerns raised and was working with all relevant institutions to improve the system.

"We appreciate the issues raised by Business Eswatini. Work-permit delays have been noted, and we are engaging with the departments involved to make sure the process becomes faster and more efficient," he said.

Khumalo added that the proposed Immigration Bill, currently under review, was designed to clean up outdated processes and clarify categories that have caused administrative back-



▲ The Private Sector met with the Government.



▲ Minister of Commerce Manqoba Khumalo.

logs.

"The Bill introduces clearer permit classifications, residence-by-investment options and a more modern framework. These reforms are intended to remove duplication and eliminate unnecessary steps that slow down approvals," he said.

The Minister said that while national security and compliance remain important, the permitting system should not hinder legitimate economic activity.

"The intention is to have a system that protects the country, but one that also supports investment. The reforms we are discussing with Business Eswatini are aimed at striking that balance," he said.

Alongside work-permit issues, the Ministry presented progress updates on several legislative and regulatory processes. The Ministry reported advancements in the ongoing review, including full digitalisation of company registration and simpler company structures aimed at reducing administrative burdens.

BE Officials outlined plans that seek to support MSMEs while ensuring that localisation



▲ BE President Mvuselelo Fakudze.

does not conflict with trade commitments. Changes under consideration would streamline licensing procedures for investors in Special Economic Zones. The ministry reiterated that proposed amendments, such as residence-by-investment, form part of efforts to modernise Eswatini's immigration framework.

Business Eswatini welcomed the updates, noting that clarity on timelines and implementation was essential. "We welcome progress in these areas. What matters now is implementation because these reforms have a direct impact on the business environment," said Fakudze.

The Ministry said the partnership with Business Eswatini would continue as reforms move forward. Khumalo concluded the meeting by emphasising that open engagement remained a priority.

"We remain committed to building an investor-friendly, competitive and inclusive business environment. Collaboration with Business Eswatini is central to that effort," he said. Both parties agreed to maintain continuous communication as work-permit reforms and other regulatory changes progress.

By Delisa Magagula

THE Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), working with the Ministry of Agriculture, has completed a five-day training programme for veterinary and livestock extension officers aimed at strengthening the country's apiculture sector and unlocking its commercial potential.

The workshop focused on practical and technical skills needed to support smallholder farmers, but officials say the wider goal is to position beekeeping as a viable business opportunity capable of driving rural income, boosting agricultural productivity and supplying a growing domestic and export honey market.

The training equipped officers from all four regions with skills in colony management, apiary establishment, bee behaviour, pest control, harvesting techniques, value addition and improved extension methods.

National Apiculture Focal Point Dr Thembi Ndlangamandla said training strengthens the country's long-term economic prospects in the sector.

"The beekeeping sector is a vital pillar for rural development and environmental sustainability in Eswatini. Equipping our extension officers with advanced apiculture skills represents a strategic investment in resilient and profitable enterprises that will benefit farming communities for generations," she said.

Ndlangamandla said the officers are now able to guide farmers through the full production chain, from hive construction to harvesting and marketing, which is essential for building a commercially competitive honey industry.

Beekeeping has become increasingly attractive for farmers due to its low start-up costs, high demand for natural honey, and resilience to climate shocks. The Ministry says the sector has the potential to create jobs, support youth and women enterprises, and supply formal markets such as retailers, cosmetic manufacturers and food processors.

Ndlangamandla added that the training directly supports farmers aiming to scale up production.

Eswatini targets growth in the honey market as ...

FAO, Govt train officers in modern apiculture

"This training has empowered extension officers to effectively guide smallholder farmers in constructing and managing their own beehives, thereby boosting production, securing livelihoods, and improving quality of life across rural communities," she said.

The Ministry of Agriculture says local honey demand consistently exceeds supply, forcing the country to import honey and hive products. Improving the technical capacity of extension officers is seen as a step toward expanding domestic production and capturing a larger share of the market.

Livestock Officer Selby Mduduzi Nyawo said the commercial opportunities created by stronger extension services are significant. "Robust extension services are essential to unlocking the full potential of apiculture from improved crop pollination and diversified incomes to stronger rural economies," he said.

Nyawo noted that improved beekeeping practices also support related industries such as beeswax production, propolis harvesting and pollination services, which can supply agribusinesses and create local value chains.

The initiative aligns with national efforts to expand apiculture hubs and promote bee-friendly indigenous flora. Strengthening extension support is expected to help farmers produce higher-quality honey that meets commercial standards, making the sector more competitive.

Government officials say the long-term plan is to build structured value chains that link smallholder farmers with buyers, processors and large-scale retailers. This includes support for storage, packaging, certification and market access.

The FAO and Ministry noted that the sector's growth is also tied to improved data collection and reporting, which will help track production volumes, monitor pests and diseases, and assess market performance.

With enhanced skills, extension officers



▲ FAO and the Government trained farmers on bees.



▲ A closer look into beekeeping.

are expected to play a central role in expanding apiculture across the country. The training has placed emphasis on business-oriented production, enabling officers to help farmers move beyond subsistence-level beekeeping into commercially viable operations.

The Ministry says the strengthened capacity will support the country's broader objec-

tives of climate-smart agriculture, income diversification and rural economic development. Meanwhile, the FAO's partnership with the Ministry continues as part of efforts to build sustainable agricultural enterprises capable of increasing productivity and improving market competitiveness in Eswatini's honey sector.

Public warned to watch for snakes as temps rise

By Delisa Magagula

THE Eswatini Anti-Venom Foundation has issued a warning for the public to be alert for snakes as the country enters a warmer, rainy period that typically increases snake activity.

The Foundation says spitting cobras are being encountered more frequently. Snake catcher and co-founder of the Foundation, Thea Litschka-Koen, said the rise in sightings is normal for this time of year but requires caution from the public.

"When the weather gets warmer and the rains start, snakes move around more. They come out to hunt, to find mates, and sometimes end up in people's yards and homes," she said. Litschka-Koen noted that spitting cobras are among the species most often reported.

"We are getting a noticeable number of calls about spitting cobras. They are common in many parts of Eswatini, and because they spit venom, they pose a serious risk to

the eyes if someone gets too close," she said.

She urged the public not to panic when they see a snake but to keep a safe distance and call trained handlers. "Do not try to kill the snake or chase it. That's when most bites happen. People should step back, keep pets and children away, and contact a professional catcher," she said.

According to the Foundation, snakes are more likely to be found in areas where food sources such as rodents are present. Piles of wood, long grass, damp spots, abandoned structures and cluttered corners around homesteads provide easy hiding places. Litschka-Koen advised households to tidy up spaces where snakes can shelter.

"Simple things like clearing long grass, sealing holes, removing piles of debris, and keeping storage areas organised can make a big difference. Snakes don't like open, exposed spaces. They go where they can hide," she said.

She further noted that the rain also pushes snakes closer to buildings as they look for dry ground, warmth and prey flushed out by water. Spitting cobras aim for the eyes when

they feel threatened. Litschka-Koen said eye contact with venom should be treated as an emergency.

"If venom gets into the eyes, rinse with lots of clean water immediately. Don't rub your eyes. Rinse continuously while heading to a medical facility," she said. The Foundation emphasised that most snakes avoid confrontation and only bite when provoked or cornered.

Litschka-Koen reminded the public of the crucial steps in the event of a snakebite:

1. Keep the victim calm and still.
2. Do not cut, suck or apply traditional remedies.
3. Remove tight jewellery or clothing near the bite.
4. Transport the victim to the hospital quickly.
5. Call the Eswatini Anti-Venom Foundation for guidance.

She said communities should not rely on myths or home treatments. "The only effective treatment for serious envenomation is proper medical care. Time is everything in a snakebite situation," she said.



▲ Snakes are said to increase during the warm seasons.

€2bln for African renewables projects



▲European Investment Bank (EIB) signage.

LUANDA — The European Investment Bank (EIB) is pledging more than 2 billion euros (\$2.3 billion) of financing for renewable energy projects on the African continent over the next two years.

The projects will include hydroelectric, solar and wind power plants, as well as the expansion and upgrading of transmission

and distribution facilities, the bank said in a statement.

They will be backed by guarantees from the European Commission.

EIB Vice President Ambroise Fayolle is expected to provide more detail about the pledge at a European Union-African Union summit in Angola's capital Luanda later on Monday. (Reuters)

Moz grants 30-year concession to state firms for LNG facilities



▲An ENH employee on site at one of the natural gas facilities.

CAPE TOWN — Mozambique has granted its top state-owned companies, including national oil firm ENH, a 30-year concession to build and operate natural gas facilities at the Port of Beira and the smaller Inhassoro site, the government said on Monday.

Efforts by the Southern African country to develop its oil and gas reserves have been hampered by an ongoing Islamist-linked insurgency in the north of the country that has delayed TotalEnergies' LNG plant, despite some improvements in security.

The concession will be managed through a special-purpose vehicle formed by ENH, ports and railways company CFM, electricity company EDM and Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric (HCB), alongside technical and financial partners selected by government.

The exclusive deal covers a liquefied natural gas terminal, storage facilities and the 865-kilometre (537.5 mile) Rompco pipeline linking Mozambique's gas fields

to South Africa. Rompco is a public-private partnership between the Mozambican and South African governments, each holding 40 per cent, and Sasol which holds the remaining 20 per cent.

"The project is based on a floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) anchored in Beira and Inhambane and connected to the pipeline," the National Petroleum Regulator (INP) said on its website.

The government approved the concession last week as efforts by TotalEnergies and Exxon Mobil push ahead with their own LNG projects.

The new infrastructure aims to support the transportation of LNG from different projects in the Rovuma Basin, where TotalEnergies and Exxon Mobil are active, while also boosting industrialisation by ensuring that a share of gas enters the domestic market, INP said.

"This is the logistical backbone that was missing to transform the potential of Rovuma gas into real value for the country," said a Sasol spokesperson. (Reuters)



▲Signage for the London Stock Exchange Group is seen outside of offices in Canary Wharf in London, Britain.

Stocks edge up, dollar dips as investors raise bets on December Fed cut

By Rae Wee and Amanda Cooper

SINGAPORE/LONDON — Global stocks rose on Monday, as growing expectations of a Federal Reserve rate cut in December helped offset some of the recent investor angst over excessive tech valuations that has stirred up volatility this month.

Markets are gearing up for the release of U.S. retail sales and producer prices data later in the week, as well as British finance minister Rachel Reeves' highly anticipated budget on Wednesday.

Geopolitical developments were also in focus. The U.S. and Ukraine were continuing work on a plan to end the war with Russia, after agreeing to modify an earlier proposal that was seen by Kyiv and its European allies as too favourable to Moscow. That weighed on oil prices, as a deal could theoretically release more Russian supply through an easing of sanctions.

European stocks catch up

Stocks in Europe rallied in early trading, playing catch-up with the late bounce on Wall Street on Friday, but were more or less unchanged around midday, as losses in defence stocks mounted, leaving the STOXX 600, which ended last week with a loss of 2.2 per cent, up 0.1 per cent.

Nasdaq futures and S&P 500 futures rose 0.8 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively.

The latest gains came after influential Fed policymaker John Williams said on Friday that interest rates could fall "in the near term", raising the possibility of another cut in December.

"We expect another Fed cut in December, followed by two more moves in March and June 2026 that take the funds rate to 3-3.25 per cent," said Goldman Sachs chief economist Jan Hatzius in a note.

"The risks for next year are tilted towards more cuts, as the news on underlying inflation has been favourable and the deterioration in the job market ... might be difficult to contain via the modest cyclical growth acceleration we expect."

Fed funds futures now point to a roughly 65 per cent chance that the Fed will cut by 25 basis points next month.

Data fog persists

A record U.S. government shutdown that ended earlier this month has muddled

the outlook for U.S. rates, as policymakers grapple with gaps in data that would normally guide their view of the world's largest economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics said on Friday it had cancelled the release of October's consumer price report because the shutdown had prevented the collection of data.

Generali Investments senior economist Paolo Zanghieri said he and his team believed the market was pricing in more rate cuts than the Fed might deliver.

"We see the chance of a cut next month as 50/50. Given limited new data, it would be reasonable for the Fed to wait until January, while signalling an easing bias," he said.

"More importantly, market expectations for nearly four cuts next year, based on hopes for rapid disinflation, appear too optimistic. We expect only 50 basis points of easing by summer," he added.

On alert for yen intervention

The main focus in the currency market was on the yen, which was pinned near a 10-month low, as the dollar gained another 0.3 per cent to trade at 156.81 yen. In November so far, the Japanese currency has lost around 1.8 per cent in value, making it the worst-performing major currency against the dollar this month.

Traders have been alert to the risk of intervention from Japanese authorities to prop up the yen, which has come under pressure from growing worries about the nation's fiscal health and low domestic rates.

Finance Minister Satsuki Katayama ramped up her verbal efforts to support the currency last week, which seems to have put a floor under the currency for now.

"Dollar/yen will definitely be going upwards even if you try to intervene. So I think they will have to live with this. The only way for them to do it is intervention to stop the pace maybe, but I don't think they can stop the direction," said Saktiandi Supaat, regional head of FX research and strategy for global markets at Maybank.

The dollar was weaker against most other currencies, given the rising expectations for the Fed to cut rates next month, with the euro up 0.3 per cent to \$1.1548, while sterling rose 0.1 per cent to \$1.3114 ahead of Wednesday's budget announcement.

In commodities, Brent crude futures held steady around \$62.59 a barrel, having touched a session low below \$62 earlier, while spot gold rose 0.35 per cent to \$4,079 an ounce. (Reuters)

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Congratulations

Eswatini Mobile proudly congratulates Nothando Hlophe for receiving the **Best of Africa Award** at the **18th Crown Gospel & Music Awards**.

This remarkable achievement is a true reflection of your talent, dedication, and the inspirational impact you continue to make across the continent. Your voice uplifts, unites, and brings hope to many, and we celebrate this milestone with you.

As Your Affordable Network, we remain committed to supporting local excellence and shining a light on homegrown stars who carry Eswatini's flag with honour.

Well done, Nothando!
You continue to make the Kingdom proud.



How the Nexperia chip crisis upended auto supply chains



▲ A truck waits outside of the gate of Nexperia factory amidst a shortage of chip supply caused by the diplomatic standoff between China and the Netherlands over the company, in Dongguan, Guangdong province, China.

ments to trade in yuan, haven't previously been reported.

While the Dutch government took control of the headquarters in Nijmegen, the operations in China remained under the control of Nexperia's Chinese parent.

"The Dutch thought they had seized Nexperia, but they only took over an office building," said Li Xing, a professor of international relations at the Guangdong Institute for International Strategies, a think tank.

"What this shows is that, even in mid- and low-end segments, they depend on China. If China wants to get a grip on you, it still can. You have no way out."

In a statement, a spokesperson for Wingtech said Nexperia has become an industry leader since being acquired. "The current crisis shows that breaking up international companies harms supply chains and

puts key industries at risk," the spokesperson said.

China's commerce ministry didn't respond to requests for comment.

A Nexperia spokesperson said the semiconductor industry's global complexity made it hard to foresee the impact of geopolitics.

CASE STUDY FOR POLITICAL RISK

Nexperia's chips were seen as so cheap and available that one European automaker didn't normally prepare alternative supplies, said one person at the carmaker. The chips are "very ordinary electronics with low prices," said this person, who like most of those interviewed spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive information.

The Nexperia episode shows that manufacturers' strategic vulnerability stretches beyond high-tech components, said Alfre-

do Montufar-Helu, a managing director at Ankura Consulting in Beijing.

Bosch didn't initially have sufficient alternatives ready, despite ordering 200 million euros (\$231 million) worth of Nexperia products a year, according to a person with knowledge of the matter.

Bosch declined to comment.

Nexperia resumed sales to some domestic distributors in late October but required payment in yuan, instead of foreign currencies used previously. The currency change was an apparent bid by the Chinese business to operate more independently of Dutch headquarters, Reuters has reported. Ready-to-ship chips piled up at the Dongguan plant because it wasn't able to handle all the yuan transactions, according to two people briefed on the matter.

The situation has since eased, they said.

A Wingtech spokesperson said there hadn't been a chip backlog or systems issues with yuan payment, but didn't elaborate.

China allowed some Nexperia exports to resume this month after U.S. President Donald Trump met with China's Xi Jinping in Busan. That came just in time for Bosch and suppliers Aumovio, ZF Group and Hella, which were days away from halting some production, according to a person briefed on the matter.

Bosch, Aumovio and ZF declined to comment. A Hella spokesperson said it has maintained supply-chain stability.

When Reuters visited the Dongguan plant on a recent weekday, some blinds were drawn and trucks came and went from a docking area. Dozens of scooters were parked outside.

Austria's Melecs and Apple supplier JABIL have managed to source chips from Nexperia. Both have used Chinese entities, allowing them to settle in yuan, the two people briefed on the matter said.

(Reuters)

U.S. senators call for probe of scam ads on Facebook and Instagram

U.S. senators Josh Hawley and Richard Blumenthal have asked the heads of the Federal Trade Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission to probe Meta Platforms, following a Reuters report about the social media giant's revenue from ads on Facebook and Instagram that promote scams and banned goods.

"The FTC and SEC should immediately open investigations and, if the reporting is accurate, pursue vigorous enforcement action where appropriate" to force Meta to disgorge profits, pay penalties and agree to cease running such advertisements, Hawley and Blumenthal wrote in a letter to the federal agencies.

Earlier this month, Reuters reported that internal documents from late 2024 stated that Meta expected to earn about 10% of its revenue that year – about \$16 billion – from illicit advertising. One document noted Meta earns \$3.5 billion in revenue from "higher risk" scam ads every six months. Other documents stated that Meta's anti-fraud rules didn't appear to apply to many ads that regulators and the company's own staff believed "violated the spirit" of its rules against scam advertising.

In response to the Reuters report, Meta said it had reduced user reports of scams by 58% over the last eighteen months.

The Hawley-Blumenthal letter "makes claims that are exaggerated and wrong,"

Meta spokesman Andy Stone said. "We aggressively fight fraud and scams because people on our platforms don't want this content, legitimate advertisers don't want it and we don't want it either."

Hawley, a Republican from Missouri, and Blumenthal, a Democrat from Connecticut, expressed skepticism about Meta's efforts to combat illicit advertising. They pointed to the company's "ad library," a publicly accessible database of advertising that appears on Meta's social-media platforms.

"Even a short review of Meta's Ad Library at the time of this letter shows clearly identifiable advertisements for illicit gambling, payment scams, crypto scams, AI deepfake sex services, and fake offers of federal benefits," they wrote.

The senators cited Reuters reporting that Meta itself estimated its platforms were involved in a third of all scams in the U.S., and went on to note that the FTC estimates Americans lost \$158.3 billion to scams last year.

"This would suggest Meta was responsible for more than \$50 billion in consumer loss," they wrote. Their letter alleges that Meta has consciously chosen to accept ads that promote fraudulent activities. "Scams have been allowed to take over Facebook and Instagram as Meta has drastically cut its safety staff, including for FTC mandated reviews, even as it dumps unimaginable sums into its generative AI projects."

Blumenthal and Hawley expressed par-



▲ A teenager poses for a photo while holding a smartphone in front of a Facebook logo in this illustration.

ticular concern about fake ads purporting to represent the U.S. government or political figures. They cited an example of a bogus ad that claimed President Donald Trump was offering \$1,000 to recipients of food assistance.

"While Meta has been warned about ad-

vertisement deepfakes impersonating politicians, it still continues to run fraudulent clips," their letter states. "The beneficiaries of these scams are often cybercrime groups based in China, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and the Philippines."

(Reuters)

US, Ukraine work on ‘refined’ peace plan to end war with Russia

THE United States and Ukraine sought on Monday to narrow the gaps in a peace plan to end the war with Russia after agreeing to modify a U.S. proposal that Kyiv and its European allies saw as a Kremlin wish list.

Washington and Kyiv said in a joint statement they had drafted a “refined peace framework” after talks in Geneva on Sunday. Though there were no specifics, the dialogue received a cautious welcome from some of Ukraine’s allies.

The U.S. blindsided Kyiv and European countries with a 28-point peace plan last week, giving Ukraine until Thursday to agree to a framework to end Europe’s deadliest war since World War Two.

The sudden push raises the pressure on Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, who is now at his most vulnerable since the start of the war after a corruption scandal saw two of his ministers dismissed and as Russia makes battlefield gains. He could struggle to get Ukrainians to swallow a deal viewed as selling out their interests.

After Sunday’s talks, no public statement was released on how the revised plan would handle contentious issues such as how to guarantee Ukraine’s security against future Russian threats and how to fund the rebuilding of Ukraine. Zelenskiy said negotiations were ongoing, while the Kremlin said nothing had officially been conveyed to Russia.

KYIV STILL LOOKING FOR COM-PROMISES, SAYS ZELENSKIY

“We all continue working with partners, especially the United States, to look for compromises that will strengthen but not

weaken us,” Zelenskiy said via video link from a separate summit of Ukraine’s allies in Sweden.

Zelenskiy said Russia must pay for the war in Ukraine and that a decision on using frozen Russian assets was crucial.

U.S. President Donald Trump has kept up the pressure on Ukraine to reach a deal.

“Is it really possible that big progress is being made in Peace Talks between Russia and Ukraine??? Don’t believe it until you see it, but something good just may be happening,” Trump wrote on Truth Social.

Zelenskiy could travel to the United States as soon as this week to discuss the most sensitive aspects of the plan with Trump, according to sources familiar with the matter.

The initial 28-point proposal put forth by the U.S. last week called on Ukraine to cede more territory, accept limits on its military and abandon its ambitions to join NATO, Russian demands that Ukrainians have long rejected.

“Trump’s special plan is, in general, a capitulation for Ukraine,” said Anzhelika Yurkevych, a 62-year-old civil servant in Kyiv. “I think the Ukrainian people will not agree. Even if they sign, it needs to be implemented, the Ukrainian people will be the ones to do it. And they do not agree with this.” Underscoring the war’s toll, Ukraine’s second-largest city Kharkiv was hit by what officials said was a massive drone attack that killed four people on Sunday.

With smoke rising from the rubble, one man was seen crouched and holding the hand of a dead body.

“There was a family, there were children,”



▲ Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Andriy Yermak and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, address the media after closed-door talks at the U.S. Mission in Geneva, Switzerland

said Ihor Klymenko, Red Cross Commander of the emergency response team in Kharkiv. “I can’t tell you how, but the children are alive, thank God, the man is alive. The woman died, unfortunately.”

Across the border, Russian air defences downed Ukrainian drones en route to Moscow, forcing three airports that serve the capital to temporarily restrict flights.

EUROPEAN NATIONS ISSUE COUNTER-PROPOSAL

European allies said they were not in-

volved in crafting the original plan. They released a counter-proposal that would ease some of the proposed territorial concessions and include a NATO-style security guarantee from the United States for Ukraine if it is attacked.

“We are, of course, closely monitoring the media reports that have been pouring in from Geneva over the past few days, but we have not yet received anything official,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. (Reuters)

Kremlin awaits outcome of US–Ukraine peace talks

THE Kremlin said on Monday that it would wait to see how talks between the United States and Ukraine on a potential peace plan pan out, and would not be commenting on media reports about such a serious and complex issue.

The United States and Ukraine said in a joint statement after Sunday’s talks

in Geneva that they had drafted a “refined peace framework” after an earlier 28-point plan endorsed by the Trump administration was criticised by Kyiv’s allies as too sympathetic to Moscow.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Friday that U.S. proposals for peace in Ukraine could be the basis of a resolution of the conflict, but that if Kyiv turned down the plan then Russian forces would advance further.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday that Russia had not received any official information about the outcome of the Geneva talks.

“We are, of course,

closely monitoring the media reports that have been pouring in from Geneva over the past few days, but we have not yet received anything official,” Peskov told reporters.

“We read a statement that, following the discussions in Geneva, some amendments had been made to the text which we had seen earlier. We will wait. It seems that the dialogue is continuing.”

When asked about a reported change in a clause concerning NATO and Ukraine which appeared to leave the door open to Kyiv joining the U.S.-led military alliance one day, Peskov said that the Kremlin would not be discussing details of any draft agreement based on media reports.

“This is too important and complex an issue to be guided solely by media reports on the matter. Here, it is necessary to rely on information obtained through official channels,” said Peskov.

He said there were no plans yet for a meeting this week between Russian and U.S. negotiators.

(Reuters)

Gaza truce progress slow as Israeli– Hamas violence persists

ISRAELI forces killed three Palestinians in Gaza near the line demarcating areas of Israeli control on Monday, underlining the struggle to broaden a fragile ceasefire deal approved over six weeks ago to global acclaim.

Palestinian medics said Monday’s incidents involved an Israeli drone firing a missile at a group of people east of Khan Younis, killing two and wounding another, and a tank shell killing a person on the eastern side of Gaza City.

Israel’s military said it had fired after identifying what it called “terrorists” crossing the so-called yellow line and approaching its troops, posing an immediate threat to them.

Palestinian militant group Hamas and Israel signed a truce on October 9 halting two years of devastating warfare but the agreement left the most intractable disputes for further talks, freezing the conflict without resolving it.

Both sides have since accused each other of deadly breaches of existing commitments in the agreement and of pushing back against later steps required by U.S. President Donald Trump’s 20-point peace plan for Gaza.

The Gaza Health Ministry said on Monday that at least 342 Palestinians had been killed by Israeli fire since the start of the truce. Israel says three of its soldiers have been killed by militant gunfire in the same period.

Last week, the United Nations Security Council gave formal backing to Trump’s plan, which calls for an interim technocratic Palestinian government in Gaza, overseen by an international “board of peace” and backed by an international security force.

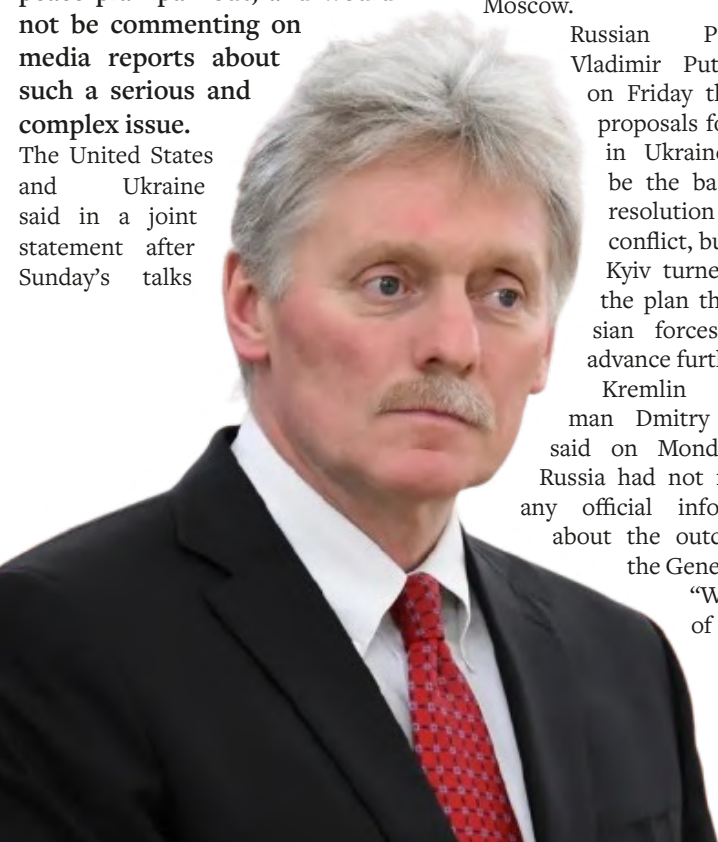
Trump’s plan also requires reform of the Palestinian Authority, based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

NEGOTIATIONS

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who helped the U.S. develop the plan and who Trump has said may join the board of peace, met the PA’s deputy leader Hussein al-Sheikh in the West Bank on Sunday.

Sheikh said in a social media post they had discussed developments following the Security Council resolution and requirements for Palestinian self-determination.

(Reuters)



▲ Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov waits before the talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Interim President of the Republic of Mali Assimi Goita at the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow, Russia.

‘Mfowethu uGrend?’ camp phase 1 lineup unveiled

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE much-anticipated ‘Mfowethu uGrend?’ camp, a men-only event dedicated to addressing mental health challenges, has officially unveiled its Phase 1 speaker lineup.

Hosted by the Gogo & S’lwane Care Foundation, this transformative camp will take place from December 19 to 21, 2025, at the picturesque Malolotja Nature Reserve.

Popular comedians and social media influencers Gogo Eswatini and S’lwane are spearheading this initiative, leveraging their widespread influence to create a safe space where men can confront often-taboo issues surrounding mental health. The duo, who recently captured national attention with their viral “Lugodvo Kimi” trend on TikTok, have moved beyond entertainment to champion a cause that touches the core of community well-being.

The confirmed lineup includes panellist and moderator Mfundo “Ndosh” Simelane, alongside speakers Mtera Thwala, Clement Dlamini, Malungelo Mamba, and Dumsani “Njobo” Mamba. Together, they bring a diverse range of perspectives and expertise that will enrich the camp’s discussions. Gogo and S’lwane will also serve as hosts, guiding participants through the program’s sessions. The vision behind ‘Mfowethu uGrend?’ is deeply philosophical: healing a man today contributes to the health and prosperity of future generations. Gogo Eswatini and S’lwane have designed this camp as a sanctuary where men can openly discuss their struggles without fear of stigma or judgment. The initiative responds to an urgent societal need, as men’s mental



▲ Comedians Gogo & S’lwane.

health issues continue to escalate with devastating consequences.

S’lwane articulated the motivation for the camp, highlighting the alarming signs visible in everyday life. “We looked within ourselves, searched within our own families and communities. We read newspapers, saw it on TV and heard about it on the radio. Worse, even our social media timelines are littered with it. From the attempted suicides to the completed ones, to the sexual and gender-based violence. The red flags are all over us, unmistakable. The crisis that is men’s mental ill-health is one we feel we

can no longer ignore.”

Gogo Eswatini underscored the responsibility that comes with their public platform. “At some point, one feels like their influence is pointless if it is not fully leveraged to help better the lives of the people who make us what we are as influencers or public figures. Particularly, in such a troubled world as ours lately; every other weekend we are either burying a friend or a relative due to suicide or we are reading in the papers that Man X has butchered Woman X, which to us will always be troubling.”

‘Kwasukasukela’ launches major auditions

ESWATINI’S film industry is undergoing a remarkable surge as the Kwasukasukela: The Swazi Story Project takes centre stage with auditions for four eagerly awaited films, ‘Her,’ ‘Bigamy,’ ‘Talk to Me,’ and ‘Lifindvo.’

The auditions kicked off on November 22, 2025, at the Eswatini Theatre Club, where 58 aspiring actors gathered, each hoping to secure a role in the upcoming productions. The energy was palpable as hopefuls showcased their skills, embodying characters that reflect the diverse experiences and rich cultural heritage of Eswatini. The event, which will continue November 29, 2025, promises to unearth even more talent from across the nation, reinforcing the project’s commitment to inclusivity and cultural representation.

Kwasukasukela’s focus on SiSwati-speaking actors aged 20 to 40 underscores its mission to elevate local voices and narratives. By centering stories told in the native language and by native speakers, the project fosters a deep sense of pride and ownership within the Eswatini community. This approach not only enriches the national cultural fabric but also positions Eswatini’s film industry as a beacon for authentic African storytelling.

Welile Masuku, the supervising producer



▲ Some of the Kwasukasukela: The Swazi Story Project contestants.

of Kwasukasukela, shared her enthusiasm about the project’s trajectory. “We are dedicated to showcasing SiSwati-speaking talent and elevating our stories,” Masuku said. “These four are set to begin shooting in December, and we are thrilled to see what our local actors can bring to the screen.”

Competition

Among the actors vying for roles is Siphosethu Manana, a notable figure in Eswatini’s creative scene. Manana recently gained acclaim for his award-winning short film ‘My GPS,’ which won the 2025 EU Film

Festival smartphone short film competition. His participation in the auditions, particularly for the role of Sakhile, a pivotal leader in one of the films, adds significant weight to the project.

Adding to the dynamic pool of talent was Lisa Mavuso, renowned for her compelling portrayal of Thando in the popular television series ‘Ekhaya.’ The auditions also featured Bukhosi Ginindza, an Eswatini poet known for his evocative storytelling and cultural insights. Ginindza was competing for the role of Sibeko.



▲ Eswatini Lifestyle Awards founder Jumbo Khumalo.

Eswatini Lifestyle Awards 80% sold out

THE Eswatini Lifestyle Awards are rapidly approaching a full house, with 80 per cent of tickets already sold out for the highly anticipated event scheduled on November 29, 2025, at Mavuso Trade Centre.

The evening will commence with a red-carpet affair from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm, where guests will witness the arrival of Eswatini’s most influential personalities dressed to impress. This opening segment sets an elegant tone, offering media and attendees the chance to capture memorable moments and engage with the country’s leading figures in business, culture, fashion, and leadership.

Following the red carpet, the event will shift gears into a lively karaoke session from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. This interactive warm-up is designed to engage guests in a fun and relaxed atmosphere, encouraging participation and camaraderie before the formal awards ceremony begins. The main program will then run until 10:00 pm, featuring the presentation of awards that celebrate outstanding achievements in various lifestyle domains.

Ticket pricing has been structured to accommodate a broad audience, with general admission tickets available at E250 and VIP tickets priced at E350. The VIP experience promises exclusive benefits, including premium seating, enhanced hospitality, and closer interaction with the event’s stars and honorees.

Transformation

This year marks a significant transformation for the event, which was formerly known as the Jumbo Festival. The rebranding to the Eswatini Lifestyle Awards reflects a strategic decision to sharpen the event’s focus on honouring excellence and raising its profile as a prestigious awards ceremony. The new name explicitly highlights the core purpose of the event, celebrating remarkable contributions to Eswatini’s vibrant lifestyle sectors. Jumbo Khumalo, the event director, shared his enthusiasm about this evolution, “We are thrilled to announce the rebranding of the Jumbo Festival to Eswatini Lifestyle Awards. This exciting new chapter reflects our commitment to celebrating the best of Eswatini’s praiseworthy personalities across all fraternities of lifestyle like business, leadership, corporate, culture, fashion and creativity.” Since its inception, the Jumbo Festival has been a dynamic platform that showcases the country’s rich talent and innovation. It provided a stage for both emerging and established figures to gain recognition for their contributions to Eswatini’s cultural and economic landscape.

“The Jumbo Festival has been a staple of Eswatini’s lifestyle scene, showcasing talented individuals across various categories. As we continue to grow and evolve, we have recognised the need to intensify the awards part of the concept henceforth the resolution to have the word ‘awards’ in the event name,” Khumalo explained.

I suffered a stroke last year – Donald Glover

DONALD Glover (formerly known as Childish Gambino) shocked fans with a jaw-dropping confession ... revealing a stroke and multiple health scares were the real reasons behind the sudden cancellation of his New World Tour.

The artist opened up during his set at the Camp Flog Gnaw Festival on Saturday, telling fans things got serious fast while he was on the road last year.

“I had a really bad pain in my head in Louisiana, and I did the show anyway,” he told the crowd. “I couldn’t really see well, so when we went to Houston, I went to the hospital, and the doctor was like, ‘You had a stroke.’ And the first thing I thought was like, ‘Oh, here I am still copying Jamie Foxx.’”

The health scare didn’t end there ... he went on to reveal he also broke his foot, and doctors later found a hole in his heart requiring two surgeries.

Reflecting on the ordeal, he left the audience with a message that hit hard ... “They say everyone has two lives, and the second life starts when you realize you have one. You should be living your life how you



▲ Donald Glover (formerly known as Childish Gambino).

want. If we have to do this again, it can only get better.”

Fans had long wondered what really caused the cancelled tour dates. At the time,

DG only said he needed surgery and time to heal. Now, it’s clear he wasn’t just stepping away from the stage ... he was fighting to stay alive. **TMZ**

Humans competing with AI on Charts

TREVOR Jackson is a “Call Of Duty” superfan ... but he’s not so crazy about sharing Billboard Chart space with artificial artists!!!

TMZ Hip Hop linked up with Trevor on Saturday afternoon at Monster Energy’s epic “Call of Duty: Black Ops 7” Launch Party in NYC and got his thoughts on the growing A.I. trend within the music industry. Xania Monet isn’t a real person but has a very real presence on the Billboard Airplay Chart and even has fans confusing her for an actual Grammy-winner ... Victoria Monet!!!

Trevor tells us he’s prayerful that the tech falls into the right hands, but you can’t put air back in the bottle, and he uses several movie examples to show how humanity has been warned ... “iRobot,” 2001’s “A.I. Artificial Intelligence” and “Avengers: Age of Ultron”! The “Grey’s Anatomy” star can’t knock the hustle but can’t help feeling slighted, having been recording music for 20-plus years without a Billboard placement ... that’s real blood pumping through those vocal chords, buddy!!! He released his new project today -- affectionally dubbed “I Love You, Goodbye (The Greatest Breakup Album of All Time)” -- but here’s to hoping he can start a love affair with the Billboard charts. **TMZ**

TREE TOPS
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Black Coffee shares insights on Africa’s potential at BoF Voices

SOUTH African, Grammy Award-winning producer and DJ Black Coffee was one of the speakers at the 10th anniversary edition of BoF Voices. Black Coffee shared insights on his personal journey to becoming one of the world’s most in-demand electronic DJs at the prestigious event, held at Soho Farmhouse in Oxfordshire, United Kingdom.

At BoF Voices Black Coffee joined BoF founder Imran Amed to discuss a powerful truth, the world still underestimates Africa. ”The biggest lie about the continent is how we are made to be seen. Just the continent of Africa, if you look at the globe, it’s made smaller but it’s bigger than what it actually is. I’m not even talking about its talent, its taste, its fashion, its music, its culture. I’m just talking about how the entire continent is made to look.”

Black Coffee during the discussion said he’s one of the African continent’s “few exports,” to the rest of the world.

“We have to work 10 times harder, you know. We don’t have opportunity. We have the talent, we have, and this is across the

board, not just in music, in everything that we do.

“Africa is a very, it’s a \$31 billion industry today, projected to be \$50 billion by 2030. But still, we import more than we export. I’m one of the few exports of the continent.” Black Coffee’s insights have opened up a discussion, with some agreeing with his sentiments, which come at a time when the world’s attention is on Africa.

The international DJ continues to make power moves; he was recently named ‘Billboard African Power Player of the Year’ and used his acceptance speech to urge people to back the dreams of children.

“I want to say to everyone in this room, if you have a child who wants to pursue music, even if it’s unclear, even if you’re not sure how far it’s going to go.

“Even if your child says they want to be an astronaut, and you think, ‘How possible is that in Africa?’ Support. We need to be there for each other, we need to encourage each other more,” he added.

(IOL)



▲ South African, Grammy Award-winning producer and DJ Black Coffee.

Ntando Duma-Rambani misses NFTA after designer fumble

ACTRESS and entrepreneur Ntando Duma-Rambani suffered a bad case of “what I wanted vs what I got”.

What was meant to be a glamorous moment for her turned into a night spent at home, where she was left with an outfit she wanted nothing to do with as she ended up taking off her eyelashes in defeat.

According to Duma-Rambani, she was meant to open the National Film and Television Awards (NFTA) on Saturday, November 22, at the State Theatre in Pretoria. She had been invited to present the very first award of the night; however, she did not get to leave the house.

In a video she shared on Instagram, she explained that she had everything lined up for the night. Her husband’s outfit was sorted, and she had asked a designer she “trusted with her life” to create a butter yellow two-piece that was cute, elegant and a little bit sexy.

(IOL)

Londie London named best female TV personality

REALITY TV star Londie London (real name Londiwe Zulu) has won Best Female TV Personality at the National Film & Television Awards (NFTA).



The 3rd annual National Film & TV Awards South Africa, took place on Saturday, November 22, 2025, at the South African State Theatre, Pretoria.

Londie London, appeared on season five of “The Real Housewives of Durban” as a friend of the cast. She was previously a full time housewife on season two of the hit reality show.

The NFTA, are determined by public votes and, the musician had previously asked her followers to vote for her and they certainly did, earning her the award. Londie London has been on a winning streak this year, first wowing viewers with her appearance on season five of “The Real Housewives of Durban”, then going on to make business moves with her braid line and salon venture. She also returned strongly to the music scene, with several features.

Other big winners at the NFTA, include TV presenter and actor Lawrence Maleka, who took home Celebrity Personality of the Year, actor Clint Brink won Best Actor in a TV Series for his role in season three of “Kings of Joburg”.

“Big Brother Mzansi” season five winner Sweet Guluva winning streak continues, he won Best Male TV Personality. Mzansi Magic hit historical drama series “Shaka iLembe” also won big; Best Scripted TV Series, Angus Gibson won Best Director, Desiree Markgraff and Nomzamo Mbatha won Best Producer and Zamani Mbatha won Outstanding Performance.

“Open Chats” won Best Podcast, which is quite a surprising win after their podcast was rocked by controversy this year. The “Open Chats Podcast” came under fire in August 2025 for racist remarks made by its hosts about the Coloured community.

(IOL)

Sabelo The Kreator denies sexual assault allegations

SOUTH African content creator Sabelo The Kreator (real name Sabelo Hadebe) has broken his silence after he was embroiled in sexual assault allegations over the past week.

He released a statement on social media, denying the allegations made against him and added that anyone who believes that they are victims of his actions should report him to the police.

“On 21 November 2025, I was notified by close friends and family members, with concern, that I was named as an abuser on the X platform by a person named ‘PIERRE-O’.” “This post was followed by more posts by anonymous people, who attested to having suffered the same or similar abuse at my hands,” he shared.

He denied knowing any of the people who came out and accused him of the sexual assault. He said: “I do not know these people, nor have I ever interacted with them in any context.”

He added: “I further deny that I raped, alternatively,

attempted to rape, ‘PIERRE-O’ or any person for that matter. My stance against the plight that is sexual violence has always been clear - I believe victims, I stand with victims.” On November 21, an account on X @PIE_RRE_O replied to a tweet that read: “Bad day to be a rapist or abuser. I hope the fave Sunday influencer knows.”

The user of this account shared their story, claiming that the content creator tried to rape them back when they were students in varsity.

“Seeing the replies to this just makes my blood boil because he tried to rape me in varsity, at a UJ res. Here I was thinking he learnt something from that incident but clearly not. His name is SABELO, and I will never forget that night! Sabelo the creator!!!!” the user wrote. In addition, they further explained the events of the night, detailing every single thing. From the moment he allegedly tried to have sexual intercourse with them while they were sleeping.

The tweet rapidly gained attention on social media, prompting numerous other people to come forward with identical allegations concerning the content creator.

(IOL)



▲ South African content creator Sabelo The Kreator.

IN female breast cancer, lumps can be found anywhere, but commonly occur near the armpit.

In male breast cancer, lumps are usually found near the nipple. Most lumps in the breast are noncancerous, but it's still important to seek medical attention if you find one.

Finding a breast lump is cause for concern, but it may help to know that most breast lumps aren't cancerous.

In fact, around 80% of breast biopsies are benign and reveal that a person doesn't have breast cancer.

For those who do have breast cancer, the most common location of the primary tumor is the upper outer quadrant of the breast. Of course, breast cancer can start anywhere there's breast tissue.

Read on to learn more about where breast cancer lumps are found and what to do if you find one.

Where are breast cancer lumps most often located?

According to a 2023 review, research has repeatedly shown that the upper outer quadrant of the breast is the most common site of breast cancer occurrence. That would be the part of your breast nearest the armpit.

It may help to visualize each breast as a clock with the nipple at the center. Facing your right breast, the upper outer quadrant is in the 9:00 to 12:00 position. Facing your left breast, the upper outer quadrant is in the 12:00 to 3:00 position.

The reason more breast cancer lumps occur in the upper outer quadrant isn't clear, but the area does have a lot of glandular tissue.

A 2019 study analyzed data on people who'd been diagnosed with female breast cancer between 2010 and 2013.

The researchers found that those with tumors located near the periphery of the breast (including the upper outer quadrant) had better outcomes than those with tumors located near the nipple.

People with male anatomy usually only have small amounts of breast tissue in the area under or around the nipple. As a result, male breast cancer lumps are usually located near the nipple and can cause bloody nipple discharge.

The upper outer quadrant and the nipple are not the only places breast cancer can start, though.

What are the different kinds of breast lumps?

Fibrocystic changes

Sometimes, fibrous breast tissue, mammary glands, and ducts overreact to the hormones your body produces during ovulation.

These lumps typically increase in size and sensitivity in the days leading up to your menstrual period. This cycle may repeat throughout your reproductive years and gradually come to a stop after menopause.

Cysts

Cysts are fluid-filled lumps or bumps appearing anywhere under the skin, including within the breast. In breast cysts, fluid fills the lobules.

Breast cysts are typically located in the upper outer quadrant or the central margins (in the middle, close to the nipple). They are usually benign and may not require treatment unless their size or presence bothers you.

Fibroadenomas

These lumps aren't typically tender, though soreness is possible before menstruation. Fibroadenomas are generally moveable. You will likely feel the lump move when you apply gentle pressure to the area.

They do not increase your risk of breast cancer.

Papillomas

Papillomas are wart-like bumps that develop in the lining of your mammary ducts near your nipple. Clear or bloody discharge is possible.

There are two types: papilloma with atypia and without atypia.

Papillomas without atypia are usually not a cause for concern, but papillomas with atypia can increase the risk of breast cancer and should be removed.

Malignant tumors

Malignant or cancerous lumps are also possible, albeit much less common than other breast-related conditions.

These lumps will continue to grow until they're removed. During this time, the cancer can spread to other areas, like the lymph nodes. Early diagnosis and treatment can help improve the overall outlook.

What does a breast cancer lump feel like?

Breast cancer lumps have certain characteristics that may differentiate them from noncancerous lumps.

Keep in mind that these are generalizations. A lump is not something you should try to diagnose on your own. Doctors can't always tell by touch alone, either.

Here are some signs that a breast lump may be cancerous:

- ▶ It doesn't hurt.
- ▶ It's firm or hard.
- ▶ It's bumpy.
- ▶ It has irregular edges.

- ▶ You can't move it with your fingers.
- ▶ It's growing or changing.

Having one or more of these characteristics does not mean you have breast cancer. Breast cancer lumps can sometimes present very differently. They can be soft, moveable, and painful. They can also occur anywhere on the chest or armpit. Cancerous breast lumps are similar for people with female breast cancer and people with male breast cancer.

A breast lump is the most common symptom of breast cancer. However, breast cancer can also appear as an area of thickened tissue or skin rather than a distinguishable lump. Some types of breast cancer, such as inflammatory breast cancer, may not cause a lump at all. That's why it's important to have a doctor examine lumps that develop anywhere on your chest or underarms.

What does a noncancerous breast lump feel like?

Noncancerous breast disease is more



Where are breast cancer lumps usually found?



common than breast cancer among people with female anatomy.

There are many kinds of breast disorders, many of which present with a breast lump.

Here are some signs that a breast lump may not be cancerous:

- ▶ It’s tender, or it hurts.
- ▶ It feels soft or rubbery.
- ▶ It’s smooth and round.
- ▶ You can easily move it using the pads of your fingers.
- ▶ It’s getting smaller.

What to do if you feel a lump

Finding a breast lump can be upsetting, even if you know that most breast lumps aren’t cancerous. Because breast cancer is easier to treat before it spreads, it’s important to seek a diagnosis.

Here’s what to do if you feel a lump:

- ▶ **Consult a healthcare professional:** First things first, connect with a healthcare professional, such as a gynecologist if you have one. If you don’t have a doctor you see regularly, contact a doctor’s office or clinic in your area. Make it clear that you’ve found a lump in your breast and you need a clinical exam.
- ▶ **Remember that a physical examination may not give you the answer:** The doctor may also need to order a mammogram, an ultrasound, or an MRI. That doesn’t mean you have breast cancer.

- ▶ **Try to remain calm:** Remind yourself there’s a good chance that the lump is benign. You’re being proactive and doing the right thing by having it checked out.

- ▶ **Follow up with the doctor’s office or clinic:** Contact the doctor’s office or clinic to get your test results, understand what they mean, and find out what your next steps are.

- ▶ **Prioritize your own health:** Be persistent and diligent — if you can’t get an appointment or your concerns aren’t fully addressed, seek out another doctor.

Outlook

Most breast lumps turn out to be something other than breast cancer. Even so, localized breast cancer is highly treatable.

Based on data collected between 2015 and 2011, localized female breast cancer has an overall 5-year relative survival rate of 91.7%.

This means that people with female breast cancer are almost as likely to live for another 5 years as people without female breast cancer.

The bottom line

In people with female anatomy, breast cancer lumps are usually found in the upper outer quadrant of the breast. In people with male anatomy, they’re usually found near the nipple.

You can help catch breast cancer before it spreads by familiarizing yourself with how your breasts normally look and feel. One way to do this, particularly if you have a higher-than-average breast cancer risk, is to perform a breast self-exam.

If you discover a lump or notice other changes in the way your breasts look or feel, contact a doctor right away.

Healthline

Technology or Video Game addiction

INTERNET Gaming Disorder (IGD) is officially recognized in the latest edition of the DSM-5.

Treatment can include a mix of medication, therapies, and lifestyle adjustments.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-5-TR) is the latest version of the DSM-5. The DSM-5 is the standard reference book for diagnosing mental health conditions in the United States. The DSM-5-TR includes Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) as a condition.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines IGD as “a pattern of gaming behavior characterized by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities to the extent that gaming takes precedence over other interests and daily activities, and continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences.”

However, it is important to note that IGD is a condition that needs further research, along with caffeine use disorder and other conditions.

What are the symptoms of IGD?

For an individual to have IGD, there must be “significant impairment or distress” in several aspects of a person’s life. This can look like:

- ▶ experiencing withdrawal symptoms when gaming is removed or not possible (sadness, anxiety, irritability)
- ▶ needing to spend increasing amounts of time gaming to satisfy the urge
- ▶ being unable to reduce playing, or unsuccessful attempts to quit gaming
- ▶ disengaging from other activities, or loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities due to gaming
- ▶ continuing to game despite problems
- ▶ deceiving loved ones about the time spent on gaming
- ▶ using gaming to relieve negative moods
- ▶ jeopardizing or losing a job or relationship due to gaming.

A diagnosis of IGD requires experiencing five or more of these symptoms within a year. Despite its name, IGD can include gaming on the internet with others or gaming alone.

A 2022 study found that IGD shares traits of other addictive disorders, including:

- ▶ activation in brain regions associated with reward
- ▶ decreased activity in impulse control areas
- ▶ impaired decision making
- ▶ reduced functional connectivity in brain networks that are involved in cognitive control, executive function, motivation, and reward.

The researchers found that IGD may also be associated with a decrease in gray matter volume in the brain.

How is a technology addiction diagnosed?

Talk with your doctor about your habits if you suspect your symptoms are a result of IGD. They’ll be able to help determine the



cause and provide the right treatment.

While diagnosing if you have an IGD, your doctor or mental healthcare provider may ask:

- ▶ Do you think about your previous activity or expect the next session a lot?
- ▶ Do you need to use the internet more or play games for longer to achieve satisfaction?
- ▶ Have you tried to control, cut back, or stop use without success?
- ▶ Have you stayed online longer than intended?

Risk factors

Your doctor may also ask about other symptoms or your family’s mental health history. IGD can co-occur with other conditions, such as:

- ▶ attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- ▶ depression
- ▶ anxiety

Factors like low self-esteem and hyperactivity/inattention traits without the presence of ADHD may also increase susceptibility to IGD.

How is technology addiction treated?

Unlike other addiction treatments, completely avoiding the internet isn’t feasible in today’s world. Instead, IGD treatment should focus on time management and balancing or controlling use. However, it may help to avoid certain applications if they’re the cause of your addiction.

Research on the efficacy of treatments for IGD is largely inconclusive due to a lack of high quality studies. Bupropion, a medication used to treat depression, and

cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) are notable options, but further research is needed.

Additional treatment strategies can include:

- ▶ suggesting a new schedule to disrupt patterns
- ▶ using real events and activities to help you log off
- ▶ setting goals to help limit use time
- ▶ quitting use of specific applications
- ▶ reminding yourself the benefits of stopping
- ▶ creating an inventory of missed activities due to an IAD
- ▶ joining a support group
- ▶ engaging in family therapy

Treating an IGD can also be a combination of therapies. It may also involve treating any co-occurring mental health conditions.

Talk with a mental health care professional about your options if you suspect you or someone you know has an IGD. They’ll be able to suggest a treatment plan to help.

Other factors to consider

IGD can have an impact on other aspects of a person’s life outside of mental health. For instance, if an individual spends a lot of time playing games with microtransactions, their financial health may be at risk.

Larger amounts of time spent playing these types of games are associated with an increased risk of gambling disorder. Games with loot boxes appeared to pose a greater risk of addiction than other types of microtransactions.

In more severe cases, IGD can impact other areas of an individual’s well-being. For example, IGD may lead one to neglect regular physical activity, adequate nutrition, and personal hygiene in order to make more time for gaming. **Healthline**

Around the world in pictures



▲ Rescue workers inspect a damaged vehicle after suicide bombers targeted the headquarters of a Pakistani paramilitary force in Peshawar, Pakistan.



▲ Snow is cleared from the street in front of the Brandenburg Gate after snowfall hit Germany's capital Berlin.



▲ A banner showing late Hezbollah leaders Hassan Nasrallah and Hashem Safieddine is placed at the site of an Israeli strike that happened yesterday on a building, after what the Israeli military said was an airstrike that killed Hezbollah's top military official, following a U.S.-brokered truce a year ago, in Beirut's southern suburbs, Lebanon.



▲ A man walks through floodwater as rain pours in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



▲ Army soldiers walk, after suicide bombers targeted the headquarters of a Pakistani paramilitary force in Peshawar, Pakistan.



▲ Specialists oversee the lifting of a Soyuz 2.1a booster rocket with the Soyuz MS-28 spacecraft onto the launch pad ahead of the next crewed launch to the International Space Station at the Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan.



▲ Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola.

Guardiola apologises after confrontation

MANCHESTER
City manager Pep Guardiola said he was embarrassed and ashamed after a confrontation with a cameraman following his side's Premier League defeat at Newcastle United on Saturday.

Guardiola was furious at several decisions during the 2-1 loss at St James' Park and appeared to take out his frustration on a pitch-side TV cameraman after the final whistle.

Speaking on Monday ahead of City's Champions League home clash with Bayer Leverkusen, Guardiola said: "I feel embarrassed and ashamed when I see it. I don't like it."

"I apologise to the cameraman. I am who I am. Even with 1 000 games I am not a perfect person and I make mistakes. I defend my team and my club."

City's defeat left them seven points behind leaders Arsenal in the Premier League

but they will have an immediate chance to shrug off any hangover as they take on Leverkusen in what will be Guardiola's 100th Champions League game as City manager.

On yet another milestone, shortly after reaching 1 000 games as a manager, Guardiola said: "I realise I'm getting old. It's good. It means every season we've been there."

"It's a huge competition. It's special for the players. To challenge yourself with the best teams in Europe is incredible, a huge experience. For the club, in terms of reputation, prestige and financial issues it's massively important."

City are fourth in the Champions League table after three wins and a draw and victory at home to 21st-placed Leverkusen would leave them in a strong position to claim a top-eight position and avoid the necessity of a playoff to reach the knockout rounds, a situation that cost them dear last season when they bowed out 6-3 on aggregate to Real Madrid. (Supersport)



'Sincaraz' in full swing, but ITF chief sees challengers looming

CARLOS Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner may have turned men's tennis into a duopoly over the last two years by sweeping the Grand Slams, but International Tennis Federation CEO Ross Hutchins is convinced a new wave of challengers will emerge. The early 20-somethings, dubbed 'Sincaraz', split the majors again this year and clashed in six finals overall, reinforcing their grip on the men's game and signalling a power shift after the retirements of Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray. While 38-year-old Novak Djokovic remains a huge threat as the only active member of the "Big Four" that amassed 69 Grand Slam trophies over two decades, it is the "Sincaraz" rivalry that is defining a new era

for the sport. "It's exciting, isn't it?" Hutchins told Reuters. "I mean, what a story. Every time that we see amazing players come to the end of their careers, it seems like two, four, six, eight new players pop up and take the level forward to another dimension." "What historic champions we've had, what amazing players we've had in the past. Now these two continue to push each other to new levels. Their serves improve, their forehands improve, their movement improves and their mentality improves. "They keep taking the sport to another level, which is just embracing the world with such excitement every time they get on court. But the sport has a strong contingency of groups behind them as well." (Supersport)

Kaizer Chiefs renew interest in Ugandan striker

KAIZER Chiefs are said to have renewed their interest in Simba SC striker Steven Dese Mukwala. Amakhosi were linked with the Ugandan striker at the beginning of the season, with reports emerging from Tanzania saying that coach Nasreddine Nabi, who has now been sacked by Chiefs, had flown to the country to try and convince him to come to South Africa.

However, no deal materialised and Mukwala remained with Simba.

Now Phakaaathi has learned through a source in Tanzania that Chiefs are still keen to bring the 26-year-old centre forward to Naturena.

"Chiefs are still very much interested in Mukwala. They want to sign him in January and Simba are also open to selling him at the right price of course," said the source.

Mukwala, who began his professional career at Vipers in the Ugandan Premier League, has also played for Maroons FC and URA FC. He has also spent a year in Ghana playing for

Asante Kotoko. "It's very different from the PSL. Here you must be more focused, more aggressive. At this level, matches are decided by very small details. "Looking at our performance, we deserved a minimum of a draw. But we have to learn from our mistakes. We'll analyse the game, look at the positives and the negatives, and continue to work." (The Citizen)



▲ Kaizer Chiefs are said to be keen to sign Steven Mukwala of Simba.

Messi magic as Miami thrash Cincinnati, face NYCFC next

LIONEL Messi produced a vintage performance as Inter Miami stayed on course for their first MLS Cup final appearance with a 4-0 rout of FC Cincinnati on Sunday.

Argentine superstar Messi scored once and provided the assists for all of Inter's other goals, with Tadeo Allende scoring twice and Mateo Silvestri adding the other to send Miami into next Saturday's Eastern Conference championship.

Inter Miami will play host to New York City FC to decide a berth in the MLS Cup final after visiting City upset top seed Philadelphia 1-0 in the night's other match.

Argentine forward Maxi Moralez scored the only goal in the 27th minute to advance New York City, the 2021 MLS Cup champions.

Third-seeded Miami will head into next weekend's fixture brimming with confidence after laying on a performance of pace and precision to dispatch second seeds Cincinnati.

Miami coach Javier Mascherano lavished praise on Messi and his teammates after a performance he described as near-perfection.

"I'm proud of how the team played on a very difficult pitch against a very difficult opponent," Mascherano said.

"The players showed incredible character and played a practically perfect match.

"It's an honour and a privilege not only to manage Leo but this group of players. We know what Leo is capable of; he proves it every weekend. Today, he did another incredible job off the ball, because we already know what he's capable of with it."

A sold-out crowd of just over 26 000 had packed Cincinnati's TQL Stadium hoping to see the home side



▲ Lionel Messi.

score an upset over Mascherano's star-studded Inter team.

But Cincinnati were made to pay for failing to take their chances in a bright opening, with striker Kevin Denkey forcing a good save from Miami goalkeeper Rocco Rios Novo after 15 minutes.

Miami took the lead moments later when Messi picked out Argentine teenager Silvestri – who had started instead of veteran Luis Suarez – with an incisive pass down the left flank.

Silvestri duly returned the favour with a pinpoint cross into the area that Messi coolly nodded home to make it 1-0.

Cincinnati squandered a chance to draw level in the 22nd minute when Venezuelan forward Ender Echenique burst into space but dragged his shot wide.

Thereafter it was all Miami, and Messi might have made it 2-0 on 27 minutes, advancing into space but hooking his shot wide of the post.

Inter's more incisive attacking play got its reward, though, on 57 minutes, when Messi found Silvestri on the edge of the area, where the Argentina under-20 international curled home to make it 2-0.

As an increasingly desperate Cincinnati chased the game, more space opened up, and with Messi pulling the strings it was only a matter of time before Miami increased their lead.

Messi threaded a pass to Allende to make it 3-0 on 62 minutes, and then sprang the offside trap once more on 74 minutes to set up Allende for the fourth.

(Supersport)

I told you we were going in right direction

ENGLAND finished last year's Autumn series with a win over Japan to end a run of five defeats, with coach Steve Borthwick promising the good times were just around the corner, and a year on it seems he knew what he was talking about.

They began 2025 with defeat by Ireland, but have since gone on impressive 11-match winning run that, ahead of next month's 2027 World Cup draw, has lifted them to third in the rankings behind New Zealand and runaway leaders South Africa.

Sunday's 27-23 victory over Argentina completed a clean sweep of four Autumn Internationals for the first time since 2016 - Eddie Jones's first year in charge.

It was probably the least impressive of the four, however, after beating Australia, Fiji and New Zealand, but the fact they held off a late Puma fightback was indicative of the team's development.

"I'm pleased with the results, pleased with many aspects of the performance... we found a way to win," Borthwick said after Sunday's game, in which England raced to a 17-0 lead but finished defending a lineout on their own five-metre line with the clock in the red.

"I think we've seen growth in some areas. I think there's plenty of things to work upon as well. As I said at the time (a year ago), sometimes you've got to go through some tight losses to understand how to actually convert into wins with a young side. That's what the team's doing.

"The depth is building as is the number of games these guys are playing together and the experience level is also increasing."

BORTHWICK HAS OPTIONS

Borthwick has done a terrific job in getting a wide selection of players on the pitch over the last two years and now does have real choices in a number of key positions.

Even the midfield - a perennial issue for England since the glory days of the 2003 World Cup - is developing options, as

Max Ojomoh responded to his unexpected late call-up with a man-of-the-match performance in his second cap against Argentina.

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England should hit the ground running in the Six Nations when they host Wales on 7 February, before going away to Scotland, hosting Ireland and finishing on the road to Italy and France as they chase a first title since 2020.

(Supersport)



Rangers sack chief executive and sporting director

SCOTTISH football giants Rangers have sacked chief executive Patrick Stewart and sporting director Kevin Thelwell it was announced on Monday, with the Glasgow club saying the pair were not aligned with their "vision for the next chapter".

Both officials had been criticised by Gers fans following a poor start

to the season that led to manager Russell Martin's dismissal in October after just one win from his first seven league matches in charge.

Former Manchester United chief executive Stewart only arrived at Ibrox in December, while Thelwell's appointment was announced in April, although he did not take up his post until leaving Everton at the end of last season.

Rangers have since been taken

over by a US-based consortium led by Andrew Cavenagh, who has now appointed director Fraser Thornton as interim chief executive while the club seek replacements for Stewart and Thelwell.

Rangers have won four straight league games under new boss Danny Rohl but are still nine points adrift of Scottish Premiership leaders Hearts. (Supersport)



▲ Steve Borthwick.



Eswatini U20s, Sitsebe in Moz, Lesotho friendlies

Stories by Chris Dlamini

IT was an international weekend for the country’s National Under-20 boys’ squad and the senior women’s National Team Sitsebe Samhleka. The two squads flexed muscles against their counterparts from Mozambique and Lesotho on Saturday and Sunday. This was at Somhlolo National Stadium, Lobamba, on Saturday, and then at the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) Technical Centre, Lobamba, on Sunday.

Both visiting countries brought their under-20 boys and senior women’s squads. On Saturday, the day started with a 1-1 draw between Eswatini’s Sitsebe and Mozambique. The latter scored late in the match from a spot kick. The second match was between Eswatini

Under-20 boys and Mozambique Under-20s. The home team made light work of their rivals, netting twice in the first half before wasting some chances in the second half. This is despite Mozambique getting an early red card, which was soon followed by another for Eswatini head coach Sikhalo Dlamini. After this game, it was Lesotho against Mozambique ladies before Eswatini boys lost 2-0 to Lesotho. Meanwhile, on Sunday, Sitsebe drew 1-1 with Lesotho and lost 1-0 to Mozambique. The games were part of preparations for next year’s possible two COSAFA tournaments per category, following the decision to postpone this year’s women’s and juniors’ tournaments. The Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (COSAFA) speculated it could host the tournament’s around February next year and still host the 2026 editions later in the year.



THE RESULTS:
Women
Eswatini 1-1 Mozambique
Eswatini 1-1 Lesotho
Eswatini 0-1 Mozambique
Boys
Eswatini 2-0 Mozambique
Eswatini 0-2 Lesotho

▲ Mozambique ladies team.

MPC star ‘Dodge-s’ ‘Bee’ sting to title

By Chris Dlamini

WHAT a way to lose the title! On the very last matchday, the day that mattered most as the Sphana Investments Seniors Singles Pool League title was at stake, then leader Sandile ‘Bee’ Dlamini lost his sting. It was always a tough one as his rival, Manzini Pool Club’s (MPC) Sithembiso ‘Dodge’ Matsebula, had been in blistering form both individually and at team level. The two clashed on Sunday, level on 72 points from 28 matches. Dlamini was at the summit and needed to beat Matsebula and win his other final fixture to be crowned the inaugural champion. However, he was outplayed by his more experienced rival. Dlamini lost 7-1. This saw Matsebula replace him at the summit before the former sealed the title with a 7-2 victory over Bongani Mdluli. Dlamini managed to win his last match 7-0 against Mthoko Shabalala. This means he now has to hope third-placed Dumisani ‘Dinho’ Ma-



▲ Manzini Pool Club’s (MPC) Sithembiso ‘Dodge’ Matsebula, had been in blistering form both individually and at team level. lindzisa slumps in his match, as he is three points behind him. They could finish level on 75 points, whereby the frame difference will then count to separate them. Weekend Results: Dodge 7-1 Bee Dodge 7-2 Bongani Bee 7-0 Mthoko Menzi 7-3 Bongani Bongani 7-5 Chawe

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MTN PREMIER LEAGUE 2025/26 REVIEW

By Chris Dlamini

HISTORY is being rewritten in the MTN Premier League, which is turning out to be one for the bookmakers. It's one where the big are turned into ordinary sides, the small into unbelievable winning machines.

After Matchweek 7, the summit belongs to Manzini Sea Birds and the top 8 to neither of the 'Big 3' nor Royal Leopard who are still fresh from the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup second preliminary stage. Here's our weekend review.

AT THE SUMMIT:

Manzini Sea Birds (1st - 16 points)

- Unstoppable! Not even a star-studded and fresh from the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup second preliminary stage Royal Leopard could stop them - Sea Birds cruised to a comfortable 2-0 win. They are well on course for the E120 000 first round leaders' incentive with a point advantage over defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs.

CLOSER TO SEA BIRDS:

Nsingizini Hotspurs (2nd - 15 points)

- The defending champions took over the second spot after edging Moneni Pirates 1-0, dislodging Green Mamba who lost to Young Buffaloes.

Young Buffaloes (3rd - 13 points)

- They started quite badly, but in the last three matches, they managed to raise the bar and even beat Green Mamba 2-1 on Saturday to go third on the table of standings.

Ezulwini United - (4th - 13 points)

- Minnows with a purpose Ezulwini United are. They have a strong team with experienced stars and look set to shock many rivals this season. They target a top 4 finish, and it is possible.

THE UPSETS:

Royal Leopard - 14th (5 points)

- Whatever is happening here, Royal Leopard needs to quickly get out of it. From the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup to such a low is shocking. Leopard was runners-up last season by just a point but again lost 2-0 to leaders and by every right, minnows Manzini Sea Birds, making it four consecutive defeats.

Manzini Wanderers - 15th (5 points)

- "Our problems are beyond what you know." These were the words of one of the team's players after the 4-1 anguish by rookies Tabankulu Celtics. They were uttered by an official as well before the match in a light conversation about their fiscal challenges. If you are a Wanderers supporter, then you may want to use this as a food for thought. Relegation is once again calling, and there appears to be no solution to their on and off the field.

AT ROCK BOTTOM

Sisonkhe FC (16th - 4 points)

- Did the 1-0 win over inconsistent giants Mbabane Highlanders give them some wings? It was only in matchweek six that they shocked Highlanders and earned their first points. After this weekend, they have four points following the 1-1 draw with an on-form Rangers.

Sea Birds hub kings!

... As city neighbours Moneni, Wanderers, Leopard misery continues



▲ Sea Birds players.



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs fans at King Sobhuza II Stadium.



▲ Rangers players.

THE GOALBANGERS:

Hleliso Gamedze (Rangers - 8 goals)

- He was on target again as Rangers were held to a 1-all draw by Sisonkhe. The goal-a-game forward is a serious contender for the November Player of the Month Award, which he won last month as well.

Malangeni Dlamini

(Tabankulu Celtics - 7 goals)

- As the rookies tossed and turned ailing giants Manzini Wanderers, he netted a brace in the 4-1 massacre. He now has seven goals and is another November Player of the Month Award contender, alongside Nsingizini Hotspurs' Joel Madondo, among others.

THE FANS CORNER:

The Mavuso Sports Centre was the place to be. However, it was disappointing to see a handful of fans showing their frustration and causing near fights over the changes at Mbabane Highlanders. The sooner they embrace the change, the better, or they could even get themselves banned by the PLE. Otherwise, thumbs up to the loyal supporters of Highlanders, Wanderers, Ezulwini United and Tabankulu Celtics who came to support their teams and caused no scenes at the sound of the final whistle.



▲ Royal Leopards.

COACH OF THE WEEK:

Ncamiso Nxumalo (Tabankulu Celtics)

- He led his side to yet another big win, a 4-1 triumph over a struggling giant, Manzini Wanderers, and they are fifth on the log table.

MATCHWEEK 7 RESULTS:

Y. Buffaloes 2-1 G. Mamba
N. Hotspurs 1-0 M. Pirates
M. Sea Birds 2-0 R. Leopard
Amawele 1-2 Ubombo Sugar
M. Wanderers 1-4 T. Celtics

Ez. United 2-2 M. Highlanders
Sisonkhe 1-1 Rangers
M. Swallows 1-1 M. Chiefs

UPCOMING FIXTURES (MATCHDAY 8):

T. Celtics vs. G. Mamba
M. Highlanders vs. Rangers
M. Pirates vs. M. Chiefs
Ub. Sugar vs. R. Leopard
Sisonkhe vs. M. Swallows
Ns. Hotspurs vs. M. Sea Birds
Amawele vs. M. Wanderers
Ez. United vs. Y. Buffaloes

HALFWAY THROUGH Y'ELLO LEAGUE FIRST ROUND. . .

By Chris Dlamini

THE tune changes this weekend in the MTN Premier League. With matchweek eight coming up this weekend, it marks the first half of the first round. It is anticipated that the focus shifts from just being about collecting maximum points, but the first-round leaders' incentive of E120,000.

Interesting fixtures to mark the resumption of the 'carrot' race are on offer. The highlight of them all is the top two teams in the standings, Manzini Sea Birds and Nsingizini Hotspurs. They are set to face off at King Sobhuza II Stadium this weekend.

Only one point separates them. The defending champions know that only a win takes them to the apex of the league table.

Any other result could see them dropping out of the top four as their close rivals are only just two points behind them. That is Young Buffaloes and Ezulwini United, who have 13 points, while fifth and sixth-placed Tabankulu Celtics and Rangers have 12 points.

"It was important for us to be consistent from our mid-week win against Malanti Chiefs. We got all the points and now we'll take a short break, then return on Tuesday for preparations against Sea Birds," said Mandla Qhogi, Nsingizini head coach, after their narrow 1-0 win against Moneni Pirates in Nhlangano on Saturday. Qhogi, however, raised one concern as the only red flag ahead

Nsingizini, Sea Birds in top spot face-off

of meeting a fired-up Sea Birds.

"I'm a little bit disappointed about our substitutes. Each time we introduce them, our game goes down, and that's something we need to fix," he said.

He said they had to improve on that. The South African coach said they had a tough win against Moneni as their second half showing slowed down when they had done well in the opening half.

He further thanked their 12th man for rallying behind the team. He will need their energy when they host Sea Birds, who are proving a tough nut to crack this season.

There was no immediate comment from Sea Birds, who sit at the summit on 16 points to Nsingizini's 15 after seven games. Meanwhile, other fixtures that involve hopefuls for the first-round cash will see sixth-placed and in-form Rangers away to Mbabane Highlanders, rookies Tabankulu Celtics against Green Mamba, and Ezulwini United taking on Young Buffaloes.

Other exciting fixtures will see Mbabane Swallows visit Sisonkhe, Moneni Pirates take on Malanti Chiefs. The full fixture, as per the PLE Master Schedule, is included in the ar-



▲ Manzini Sea Birds players celebrate in this update picture.



▲ Nsingizini's Neliswa 'Tiger' Dlamini.

ticle.		
MTN Premier League Matchweek 8:		
T. Celtics	vs.	G. Mamba
M. Highlanders	vs.	Rangers
M. Pirates	vs.	M. Chiefs
U. Sugar	vs.	R. Leopard
Sisonkhe	vs.	M. Swallows
Ns. Hotspurs	vs.	M. Sea Birds
Amawele	vs.	M. Wanderers
Ez. United	vs.	Y. Buffaloes

Moneni Pirates, Mwase part ways

By Chris Dlamini

AFTER seven league games, there is no more agreement between Malawian coach Meck Mwase and Moneni Pirates.

Mwase reportedly resigned, as announced by the hub outfit's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Brian Dlamini in a live press briefing on their Facebook page on Monday. Dlamini addressed the media and their supporters, saying it caught them by surprise.

"It is with sadness that at this time of the league, when we had started some positive displays in the team, that we have to accept the resignation of our head coach, Meck Mwase, due to some family troubles back at home.

"He needs to rush home this week, for which he asked that we release him," said the Moneni Buccaneers CEO.

Dlamini said it was unfortunate given Mwase's professionalism, wealth of knowledge, and value he brought to the team.

"We will accept applications from other coaches with the necessary qualifications. Once we have the new coach, we'll make an announcement," said the CEO.

Meanwhile, he said they had never panicked about how they were doing in the league, as they were a big team. Instead, he said they supported the coach and his assistant Charles Manda, who are all former Mbabane Highlanders mentors. Mwase finished last season with Highlanders before he joined Moneni, bringing Manda with him.

Both men were part of the briefing.

"As the CEO has already said, I have to return home. I hope the team will do well, and I'm grateful to the directors, the supporters, and mainly the players for their support. I wish the players and the whole team the



▲ Former Moneni Pirates coach Meck Mwase.

best," said Mwase.

His fellow countryman Manda, said he would miss the Pirates ship and wished for the team to turn the corner and achieve its goals. The duo were already under immense pressure after losing in the opening match of the 8Bet Trade Fair Cup, yet Moneni were runners-up last year. The MTN Premier League put more pressure on them, with supporters mumbling in social media and during games, pointing out their team lacked the energy and flair it had last season when it reached major finals. Moneni also finished as runners-up in the Ingwenyama Cup.

Moreover, the latest comes in the wake of a three-game ultimatum that saw the first game lost over the weekend. The Sea Robbers, as Moneno is also affectionately called, lost 1-0 to Nsingizini Hotspurs, a result preceded by another 2-1 defeat to Manzini Sea Birds.

Mwase and Manda had managed two wins, one draw while losing four games. They leave the team in position 11 with seven points.

Their mandate when they took the job was to deliver two knockout titles and a top four finish in the league.

Tough CAF start for Lindo at Zesco United

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

IT was a tough start for Eswatini international defender Lindo Mkhonta in the 2025/26 TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup group stages.

This follows the 1-0 defeat of Zesco United by Egyptian side Zamalek on Sunday evening in Cairo. Mkhonta was part of the Ndola-based side's starting line-up against the Egyptian side at the Cairo International Stadium.

Zesco United coach Matheus Ndlovu lamented the result. "The game was quite tactical. We were playing at a high level, especially in the group stages. Zamalek put us

under pressure early on, and we prepared not to concede an early goal. The boys did their best, but we lost concentration towards the end of the first half, and Zamalek took their chance. In the second half, we responded well but missed several opportunities. It is an important reminder that we need to work on our clinical finishing," he said.

Zesco United will now shift focus to their next clash with Al Masry on November 28, 2025, at the Levy Mwanawasa Stadium in Ndola.

Mkhonta is part of the foreign-based local contingent, which includes Justice Figareido (Chippa United, South Africa), Mxolisi Mkhonto (Morapule Wanderers, Botswana), Banele Ndzabandzaba (Botswana Police) and Sizwe Gwebu (Uganda Police).

Emajukujuku progress in Ingwenyama Cup eliminations

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

INGWENYAMA Cup regional champions Emajukujuku have advanced to the next round of this year's edition preliminary round.

The Lobamba-based side managed to beat Gobhola Green Sea 2-1 during the Hhohho Regional Football Association (HRFA) Southern stream eliminations played on Sunday at Prince of Wales Sports Ground.

They will compete in the eliminations on a date yet to be announced. Last year's regional runner-ups, Nsenga



▲ Emajukujuku celebrate winning the Regional Ingwenyama Cup last season.

Comrades, also advanced to the next round after beating Nsuka United 3-0 over the weekend under the Manzini Regional Football Association (MRFA).

Comrades will now face Ntongozi Celtics in the next round. The Lubombo and Shiselweni Regions are yet to kick off their eliminations.

The tournament's patron, His Majesty King Mswati III, commissioned the kick-off of the richest knockout tournament through Board of Trustees Chairman, Prince Hlangabeza, last Tuesday.

The annual tournament is bankrolled with E5 million, which is part of the E15 million three-year sponsorship. The tournament that blends football with culture carries a ticket to the CAF Confederation Cup and includes the Women's Cup.



Pep apologises to cameraman after confrontation

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Moneni Pirates, Mwase part ways

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Eswatini Tuesday 25
November, 2025

Daily News Sport



NSINGIZINI HOTSPURS

Manzini Sea Birds

Top of the table clash

... Leaders Manzini Sea Birds hold a single-point advantage over defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs ahead of the King Sobhuza II Stadium-bound fixture **P23**