

King grants EEC coal mining licence



By Delisa Magagula

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▲ His Majesty King Mswati III gives an audience to EEC MD Ernest Mkhonta during the 2024 Eswatini International Trade Fair.

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▲ His Majesty King Mswati III.

King grants EEC coal mining licence

By Delisa Magagula

HIS Majesty King Mswati III has approved a special licence for the Eswatini Electricity Feedstock Company to begin developing the Libhuku coal mine.

The announcement was delivered by Minerals Management Board Legal Advisor, Mbandla Manzini, during a signing ceremony on Wednesday held at the Mbabane Hilton Inn Hotel, the event was attended by government, the Eswatini Electricity Company, and industry stakeholders.

Manzini confirmed that the King had signed both the special licence and the land lease, officially authorising the commence-

ment of mining operations.

“The King granted the necessary licences and signed for the lease of the four thousand hectares. This allows the company to move into the mining phase and begin the work required to run the business and support the development of the power plant,” Manzini said.

In addition, Manzini said the licence obligates the company to provide quarterly reports to the government, covering production, development progress and compliance matters. He added that the government stands to benefit from royalties, taxes and dividends once mining begins.

Noteworthy Libhuku Mine will be operated through the Eswatini Electricity Feedstock Company, a subsidiary of the Eswatini Electricity Company. The structure includes

a dedicated entity, E and C, which is responsible for holding the mining licence and overseeing operational arrangements.

The Chairman of the Eswatini Electricity Company Board, Patrick Myeni, welcomed the decision and said it marked a turning point for the country’s energy ambitions.

“We are grateful to His Majesty for granting this licence. We will use it to generate jobs, stimulate economic growth and further the country’s development mandate. This licence will also bring direct benefit to the community of Libhuku,” he said.

The licence approval places Eswatini on a path to establish domestic energy generation from its own coal reserves, a move that aligns with government efforts to secure long-term energy independence and reduce reliance on imports.

Minister Prince Lonkhokhela sets target for 1500 megawatts

By Delisa Magagula

MINISTER for Natural Resources and Energy Prince Lonkhokhela has outlined the country’s intention to generate as much as 1500 megawatts of electricity from domestic production once the Libhuku mining and power generation project is fully developed.

He made the remarks during the signing ceremony where the coal mining licence was formally acknowledged.

Prince Lonkhokhela said the planned energy capacity represents a significant shift in Eswatini’s long-term energy strategy, which has historically relied heavily on imported electricity from regional utilities.

He said part of the projected output will be supplied to the national grid while surplus electricity will be sold to South Africa, noting that discussions with that country’s natural resources authorities are already underway.

“We want Eswatini to produce its own electricity at a scale that supports national demand and creates opportunities for export. We are engaging our counterparts in South Africa to structure future sales once the plant is in operation,” said the minister.

He noted that several companies had already approached the ministry and the EEC seeking opportunities to partner on the mining and power generation aspects of the project.

According to the minister, the licensing approval has accelerated interest and positioned Eswatini as an emerging player in regional energy production.

The minister emphasised that the project aligns with the broader development direction expressed by emaSwati during the recent Sibaya national dialogue.

He said Cabinet views the mining sector as a catalyst for economic expansion, job creation and industrialisation.

“Cabinet has a strong view that the mining sector must play a central role in reviving our economy and creating opportunities for emaSwati. This coal project speaks directly to that national vision,” he said.

Meanwhile Chairman of the Minerals



▲ The Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy with the EEC executive team pose for picture.

Management Board, Prince Guduza, pledged full support to the minister and Cabinet to ensure the project’s success.

He said the board will maintain strict compliance oversight in line with constitutional requirements.

EEC’s coal project has been in the pipeline since 2016

The Eswatini Electricity Company, through its feedstock subsidiary, began exploring coal reserves in the Libhuku area in 2016.

Legal Counsel and Company Secretary, Thabiso Masina, said geological surveys confirmed the presence of approximately twenty-three million cubic metres of coal within the targeted zone.

The coal has been classified as semi-anthracite, a high-quality grade that commands premium prices internationally.

Masina explained that the planned three hundred megawatt power plant will require about one million cubic metres of coal per year to operate at full capacity. Based on confirmed reserves, the mine can supply the plant for an estimated thirty to thirty-five years.

He added that an additional forty-eight

million cubic metres of coal may exist in the surrounding areas, although access has not yet been secured for further exploration.

“Our proven reserves give us the confidence to proceed with a long-term generation project. We have also received a letter from the Minerals Management Board indicating that the licence would be granted, and the remaining procedural steps are already underway. Now that approval has been formally granted, we can begin preparations for mining,” said Masina.

Masina said Eswatini’s semi-anthracite coal could fetch around four thousand emalangi per ton after washing, compared to approximately four hundred emalangi per ton for bituminous coal.

This opens opportunities for international sales, which the company intends to use to subsidise domestic electricity tariffs.

“The plan is to sell a portion of the coal internationally and use that revenue to help keep electricity affordable for consumers,” he said.

He added that although the company does not currently have in-house mining capacity, it is in advanced engagement with partners to execute the operational aspects of the mine.

Meanwhile EEC Managing Director, Er-

nest Mkhonta, said the company expects the power plant to be operational by the year two thousand and thirty if all approvals and funding are secured on schedule. The plant is expected to take four years to construct.

“Using our own coal ensures energy independence from the resource stage all the way to electricity generation,” Mkhonta said.

Coal project positioned as national growth driver

The Libhuku coal project is expected to have significant economic and social impacts.

The Government revenue will be generated through royalties, taxes and dividends once mining begins, a structure outlined by the Minerals Management Board during the signing ceremony.

Mbandla Manzini the MMB Legal Advisor explained that the licence places responsibility on the operating company to comply with environmental, financial and production regulations throughout the twenty-year period.

Quarterly reports to the government will form part of the compliance framework.

Chairman of the EEC Board, Patrick Myeni, said the project will stimulate job creation both during construction and once the mine and plants are operational. He said the project supports the King’s directive for national development and aims to uplift surrounding communities.

“This project will generate employment, boost the economy and bring benefits directly to the people of Libhuku. We intend to fulfil the King’s mandate for development and use this licence to advance national interests,” said Myeni.

Worth noting, the project is also expected to broaden Eswatini’s industrial base by stabilising electricity supply.

Currently, the country generates 32 per cent of its electricity locally and imports the remainder from South Africa’s Eskom and Mozambique’s EDM.

EEC spends more than E200 million per month on imported electricity.

Mkhonta noted that the company recently renewed its power purchase agreement with Eskom for another ten years, giving Eswatini the time required to build domestic generating capacity.

Stories by Delisa Magagula

Cabinet deploys experts to overhaul embattled UNESWA systems

THE Minister for Education and Training, Owen Nxumalo, has officially launched the Implementation Committee tasked with driving, coordinating, and monitoring the far-reaching reforms arising from the UNESWA Task Force Report.

The committee, appointed for an initial term of 12 months, has been directed to begin its work immediately as government moves to address the longstanding operational and governance challenges facing the University of Eswatini (UNESWA).

Speaking during the launch on Wednesday at the Ministry's boardroom, Minister Nxumalo said the establishment of the Implementation Committee marks the beginning of a new phase in government's efforts to restore the university's financial stability, academic integrity, and overall institutional effectiveness.

He emphasised the urgency of the mandate, noting that the committee is expected to begin executing its responsibilities without delay.

"We are looking forward to this team working hard and helping the university. This work becomes effective immediately. To address the situation at UNESWA, the committee must start its work right away," he said. He added that the ministry had full confidence in the team selected saying they trust this team because they have chosen the crème de la crème of the country to ensure the implementation phase proceeds smoothly.

"We believe they possess the knowledge, experience, and commitment required to deliver on this mandate," said the Minister.

Worth remembering, the launch of the Implementation Committee follows the release of the UNESWA Task Force Report, which highlighted a range of systemic challenges affecting the institution.

The Task Force was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Training after government and the public raised concerns about repeated financial crises at the university, including the recurring failure to settle utility bills and the overall deterioration of operations.

According to the report, the problems at UNESWA were not primarily the result of inadequate government subvention, but rather stemmed from internal inefficiencies, weak governance structures, and financial management shortcomings.

Among the issues noted were weak



▲ The Minister of Education and Training Owen Nxumalo announced a team that will implement recommendations of the Task Team that was investigating the state of affairs at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA).

internal controls, budget inefficiencies, operational dysfunctions, and evidence of mismanagement in multiple departments. The Task Force concluded that significant structural and administrative reforms were necessary to restore the institution's functionality and integrity.

Following the finalisation of the Task Force Report, Cabinet instructed the Ministry to ensure that all recommendations contained in the document were implemented.

Mechanism

The establishment of the Implementation Committee is the mechanism through which these recommendations will be translated into concrete actions.

Now, the committee has been mandated to develop a comprehensive, costed, and time-bound implementation plan for the recommended reforms. Its work will focus on financial, academic, and governance reforms, which the Task Force identified as critical areas requiring immediate attention.

The key deliverables assigned to the committee include the submission of an inception report within 30 days of appointment.

This report will outline the committee's approach, priorities, work methodology, and

schedule for the twelve-month term. The committee is further required to prepare a detailed implementation plan, complete with timelines, costing, and assigned institutional responsibilities across all units affected by the reform process.

Meanwhile a major component of the committee's work will involve advising the Ministry on the introduction of a performance-based funding formula for UNESWA.

Quality

The Task Force recommended shifting from the current input-based model to a performance-oriented system that rewards efficiency, quality improvements, and institutional accountability. The Implementation Committee is expected to review the necessary policy adjustments, assess institutional readiness, and provide a clear roadmap for transitioning to this funding model.

"At the end of its twelve-month mandate, the committee will submit a consolidated report summarising all actions taken, progress achieved, and challenges encountered. This report will guide the Ministry and Cabinet on further decisions regarding the restructuring and long-term

sustainability of the university," assured the minister.

Worth noting, the implementation Committee is chaired by Dr. Alex Tsela, who leads a team selected for their expertise in areas including financial management, audit, higher education governance, academic quality assurance, legal frameworks, institutional change, and organisational reform.

The full list of appointed members includes:

- ▶ Dr. Alex Tsela — Chairperson
- ▶ Kobla Quashie
- ▶ Professor Zodwa Motsa
- ▶ Musa Ndzabandzaba
- ▶ Meluleki Ndlangamandla
- ▶ Mboni Dlamini
- ▶ Mcolisi Stan Maphosa

During the launch, the Minister highlighted that each member was chosen for their professional track record and leadership ability. He reiterated that Cabinet expects the committee to uphold the highest standards of diligence and accountability throughout the reform process.

... Committee vows immediate action

SPEAKING on behalf of the appointed members, Meluleki Ndlangamandla said the committee was ready to take on the responsibility entrusted to them. He expressed appreciation for the confidence shown by the Ministry and Cabinet.

"We are ready to work. We are humbled by the appointment and by the honour to undertake such an important national task. We understand the magnitude of the work ahead and the importance of ensuring that the reforms bring meaningful improvement to the university," he said.

Ndlangamandla stated that the committee would approach the assignment with commitment, professionalism, and a shared determination to support the rebuilding of the institution. He added that the team recognised the urgency of the situation and would adhere to the timelines set by the Ministry.

Minister Nxumalo reaffirmed that government views the reform process as essential for safeguarding the university's future. He said Cabinet had made it clear that the recommendations contained in the Task Force Report must be implemented in full.

"The focus now is on action. We expect the committee to provide the necessary leadership and coordination to ensure that the recommendations are implemented effectively and within the stipulated time frame. The work begins immediately, and we expect consistent progress throughout the twelve months," said the Minister.

Support

The Ministry of Education and Training will provide technical support and oversight to the Implementation Committee, ensuring that the reform process aligns with national education policies and the broader goals for higher education in the country.

Nxumalo added that government

remains committed to strengthening the governance and operational capacity of UNESWA to enhance quality, efficiency, and accountability in higher education.

He said the outcome of the reform process would shape the long-term development of the institution and contribute to improving the country's overall education system.

A senior UNESWA staff present during the launch said the implementation Committee marks a significant step in government's efforts to address the longstanding issues facing UNESWA.

"With a clear mandate, strict timelines, and a team of experts appointed to lead the process, we expect substantial progress in the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations," said the senior staff.

Meanwhile the committee is required to begin work immediately and deliver a structured reform programme designed to restore the institution's stability, credibility, and academic performance.

“

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EswatiniBank loaned out E21bn in 15 years

By Lwazi Dlamini
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THE EswatiniBank has lived up to true mandate as a development bank having advanced as much as a staggering E21 billion in loans over the last 15 years. This was revealed by EswatiniBank Managing Director Nozizwe Mulela during the bank's Business Gala Dinner held at Royal Swazi Sun Convention Centre on Tuesday.

"Eswatini Bank remains financially strong and firmly committed to its developmental mandate. Over the past 15 years, we have extended more than E21 billion in loans across both developmental and commercial portfolio, financing communities, supporting national projects, and enabling businesses to grow. This demonstrates our continued relevance as a catalyst for socio-economic progress in the Kingdom," Mulela said.

Mulela highlighted that they acknowledge that the past few years have not been without their challenges with the bank's profitability under pressure, influenced by a combination of internal constraints and external market dynamics, including the rapidly evolving expectations of today's customer.

"One of the notable hurdles has been the delay in modernizing our systems, an area that has inevitably impacted the speed, efficiency, and competitiveness of our product offerings and overall customer experience. This evening is more than a dinner. It is a strategic gathering designed to strengthen relationships, spark new partnerships, and align our collective role in advancing Eswatini's socio-economic development. As



▲ EswatiniBank Managing Director Nozizwe Mulela seated in table with Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg and Board members Lincoln Motsa, Dumisani Mahlinza.

highlighted by the Bank's Board Chairperson, our intention is simple yet powerful 'to work better together'," she said.

Mulela said, at Eswatini Bank, they recognise that neither government, SOEs, nor the private sector can transform the economy alone and the country's progress depends on shared responsibility, shared resources, and shared vision.

"This gathering therefore serves as: a platform for open dialogue, a space for collaboration, and an invitation to co-create solutions that contribute to economic growth, financial sustainability, and national resilience," she said.

Mulela said as a bank they have met the challenges with action, not excuses. She stated that over the past three years, they have embarked on several initiatives to mitigate these challenges.

She highlighted these challenges as follows:

- **"Modernising Our Systems:** We have invested significantly in upgraded IT infrastructure, a refreshed

core banking environment (ongoing), and have a new full banking system planned for rollout in the new year. These investments are essential not optional. This is the journey we are on: to deliver a banking experience that is digital, simple, secure, and efficient.

- **Digital Banking Products:** We have also intensified our investment in digital banking, evidenced by the rollout of key innovations such as the Share-Sha digital wallet and our Agency Banking programme, among others. These initiatives mark the beginning of a broader digital transformation journey designed to expand access, enhance convenience, and improve the overall customer journey.
- **Strengthening Governance & Risk Management:** We have enhanced our credit governance structures and sharpened performance disciplines across the bank, reflecting our commitment to sustainability, transpar-

ency, and responsible lending.

- **Putting the Customer at the Centre:** Our planned customer-centric business models are being designed to offer: tailored solutions, sector-specific value propositions, and far more responsive service especially for you our SOEs and corporate clients.

"The priority is to adopt a more intentional approach where dedicated relationship teams will proactively visit your organisations to truly understand your needs, challenges, and aspirations. This is how we will build relationships that extend well beyond transactions. As we continue modernising and repositioning the bank, we humbly and confidently make a request: Let us partner with you, let us be your bank of choice for your deposits, your transactional banking, your credit requirements, and your investment needs. In short allow us to be your enabler for all things banking," she appealed to the business leaders and Corporates in attendance at the Gala Dinner.

Mulela stated that Eswatini's state-owned enterprises and private sector organisations are not just entities delivering services but they are the backbone of national development.

"The financial decisions you make influence: investment flows, job creation, infrastructure outcomes, and economic stability. Tonight is a reminder that our success is interconnected. A strong banking partner enables stronger institutions. Stronger institutions build stronger economies. And stronger economies uplift nations," she said in conclusion.

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Phocweni UEDF clinic shines

... as Health Ministry celebrates 2025 Health Excellence Awards

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THE Ministry of Health recently honoured outstanding public health institutions and professionals during the 2025 Health Excellence Awards, which was a ceremony filled with celebration and emotional tributes to the men and women who keep the nation healthy.

The event, held at The George Hotel, gathered healthcare leaders, frontline workers and government officials to acknowledge the exceptional dedication and performance across Eswatini's health sector.

Among the most celebrated honourees was Phocweni Umbutfo Eswatini Defence Force Clinic, which walked away with the title of Best Public Health Clinic.

The award confirmed the facility's rising reputation for service quality, community engagement and efficiency in primary healthcare delivery. Officials praised Phocweni for setting a benchmark in patient-centred care and applying consistent improvements in clinical standards. For many Matsapha community members, the clinic has long been a trusted point of care, and its recognition at this national level was met with visible excitement from staff and supporters.

Speaking during the ceremony, senior officials from the Ministry of Health said the awards serve as motivation for health workers who continue to display resilience under the pressures of limited resources, surges in demand and evolving population health needs. They expressed gratitude for the sacrifices and hours of service delivered in hospitals and clinics throughout the country, noting that excellence is often achieved through quiet but relentless commitment.

In the category of tertiary institutions, Manzini Government Hospital was crowned Best Tertiary Hospital. The facility has continued to make strides in specialised care, patient management and emergency services. Ministry officials credited the hospital's leadership team and staff for demonstrating consistent improvement, despite the complex needs associated with tertiary care. The award came at a time when the hospital is implementing new strategies to strengthen

quality of service and reduce the burden on referral systems.

The Best Regional Hospital award went to Good Shepherd Hospital in Lubombo, a facility widely acknowledged for its community outreach, clinical standards and efficiency. Good Shepherd has maintained strong performance in both maternal and child health, as well as in general inpatient and outpatient services. Health officials at the ceremony said the hospital's example shows that regional institutions can match or exceed performance benchmarks through disciplined management and innovative approaches.

Another notable winner was Nhlanguano Health Centre, named Best Health Centre. Located in Shiselweni, the centre has shown impressive improvements in managing long-term conditions, delivering essential health services and coordinating regional health interventions. Its staff say the award is a morale boost that will encourage them to push further in helping the community.

For exemplary contribution to health programs at national scale, the Ministry's NCD Program was announced as the Best Ministry Program. The program has led extensive initiatives to curb the rising burden of non-communicable diseases through screening, awareness campaigns and clinical management. Its teams have been active in rolling out early detection strategies and improving access to care for patients living with chronic conditions. Officials said the award recognises the commitment of the specialists and field teams who implement these interventions across all regions.

In the area of workplace safety and health protection, Matsanjani Health Centre took home the award for Best Health Facility Implementing Health and Safety Initiatives. The centre has consistently prioritised staff wellbeing, infection control and hazard management, demonstrating a strong safety culture that has helped reduce risks for both workers and patients. Members of the awarding committee said Matsanjani's efforts reflect a critical but often overlooked part of healthcare excellence.

At individual level, Sister Andrew Jele



▲ Minister of Health Mduzuzi Matsebulamaking his remarks.

received the distinction of Best Individual Contributing to Health Outcomes at Facility Level. Colleagues describe her as a dedicated professional whose compassion and skill have transformed patient experiences and helped strengthen clinical efficiency. Jele has served in the public health sector for many years, earning respect for her leadership and mentorship in nursing practice.

Community health workers were also honoured for their contributions at grassroots level. The Best Regional Community Health Worker awards went to Gugu Gama for Hhohho, Phindile Hlatjwako for Manzini, Lomagugu Khumalo for Lubombo and Philisiwe Kunene for Shiselweni. These

workers form the backbone of community-based health services, often travelling long distances to ensure households receive essential care and information. Their recognition underscored their role as vital connectors between clinics and communities, especially in rural areas.

Throughout the ceremony, speakers emphasised that the Health Excellence Awards are not merely an event but a national reminder of the importance of strengthening the public health system. Senior Ministry officials said the awards support a culture of continuous improvement by highlighting examples of best practice.

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

Shop raiders meet community's fury as...

Nkamanzi residents brings crime spree to a halt



▲ The getaway car belonging to the suspects who allegedly were doing shop break-ins at Nkamanzi community.

NKAMANZI residents have shown their growing frustration with a series of brazen shop break-ins that have plagued the area for days.

Their anger reached a breaking point shortly after midnight when a group of alleged robbers targeted yet another local store. This time, the community did not wait for dawn or for another report of losses. Instead, they mobilised swiftly and chased down the suspects, ultimately helping law enforcement intercept a vehicle believed to be connected to the recent crime spree.

According to residents and police sources, three unknown men allegedly struck their third shop of the night in what appeared to be a coordinated string of burglaries. They are said to have fled with groceries, airtime, and an undisclosed amount of cash. For weeks, shop owners in Nkamanzi have watched with fear as thieves repeatedly raided their businesses, leaving losses that many small traders say they cannot afford. Thursday night's incident became the tipping point.

Residents report hearing unusual activity around the shop shortly before midnight. Minutes later, word spread that another break in had occurred. A group of community members quickly organised themselves, following vehicle tracks and relying on tips from people who had seen a suspicious car speeding out of the village.

The chase led them to the Emtiyeni area where the suspects were believed to be heading towards Madlangempisi. By then, dozens of frustrated residents had gathered, determined not to let the robbers disappear under the cover of darkness as had happened previously. At Emtiyeni, witnesses say the community managed to intercept the suspected getaway car. Tempers flared as people shouted at the occupants to step out of the vehicle. The tension escalated and some members of the crowd damaged the car before police officers arrived at the scene.

Police officers from the nearby station responded swiftly after receiving reports

from both residents and shop owners. Their arrival prevented the confrontation from turning violent and ensured the suspects were safely taken into custody. According to police, three men were arrested at the scene. A fourth suspect fled on foot and a manhunt is currently underway.

Law

Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni confirmed the arrests and commended residents for reporting swiftly, but urged the public to avoid taking the law into their own hands. She stated that while community vigilance is welcome, mob justice or damage to property puts both civilians and suspects at risk.

"We appreciate communities that work hand in hand with the police by reporting criminal activity. However, we strongly discourage people from attacking suspects or destroying property. That is the responsibility of the courts once arrests have been made. Let us make sure that the fight against crime is safe and lawful," she said.

Losses

Nkamanzi residents, however, say their frustrations stem from feeling abandoned and unprotected after enduring repeated losses. Shop owner Mfanasibili Dlamini, who suffered a break in last week, said the events of the night show a community pushed too far. He said small shop owners

often lose thousands of emalangenis to these break ins, making it extremely difficult to recover or restock.

"Every week we hear of another shop losing groceries or cash. Some of us are still trying to recover from past robberies. We cannot sleep peacefully because we do not know who will be targeted next. People are tired and that is why they reacted the way they did last night," he said.

The damaged vehicle has been taken in as evidence and will undergo forensic examination. Police believe it may be linked to other unresolved break ins in the region. Investigators also expect to recover stolen items and trace the movements of the suspects prior to their arrest.

Man arrested for alleged rape of 16 year old teenager

A 21-year-old man from Nyatsini has been arrested and charged in connection with a troubling case involving the alleged rape of a 16-year-old girl from Ndizane.

The suspect faces serious charges under the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 2018, following a harrowing series of events that stirred concern in the community.

According to reports, the young girl had gone missing after leaving her home with intentions to submit her school books. Initially, her family believed she had gone to school, expecting her to return later in the day. However, when the evening fell and she had not returned home, concern grew among her family members. They began to suspect that something was amiss and initiated their own search efforts.

The following day, the girl's family visited a homestead in the area, where they believed she might have been staying. This inquiry was met with resistance, as the occupants of the homestead denied having any knowledge of her whereabouts. Despite their reassurances, the family's concerns only deepened as days passed without any signs of their daughter.

Feeling increasingly desperate, the girl's family decided to escalate the situation. On

November 25, 2025, they approached the local police station in search of assistance. They shared their suspicions about the possible involvement of someone in the area and provided details regarding their daughter's disappearance.

The police acted swiftly on the information provided by the family. A thorough investigation was launched, leading officers to the homestead that the family had visited days earlier. In a significant breakthrough, law enforcement was able to locate the missing girl at the very same location where the family had sought answers.

Following her recovery, the girl was taken to safety, and a formal case was opened. The police subsequently apprehended the suspect, who is alleged to have committed the crime. He has been taken into custody and charged under the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act, which outlines stringent penalties for such violations.

The suspect is expected to appear before the Nhlanguano Magistrate's Court on Thursday, where he will face the charges against him.



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GBV Police urge collective action against digital violence

ROYAL Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has joined the global community in commemorating the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children.

The Police has issued a strong call for united action against the rising threat of digital violence targeting women and girls.

REPS have asserted that online harassment, abuse and digital intimidation have become widespread, posing serious dangers to the safety, dignity and human rights of women and girls who rely on digital platforms for communication, learning and economic opportunities.

In a statement the REPS stressed that the fight against gender based violence can no longer overlook the escalation of harmful behaviour on social media, messaging applications and other online spaces. They said the digital world has become an extension of the physical environment, and abusive behaviour online has real and lasting impacts on victims.

According to the Royal Eswatini Police Service, digital violence includes a wide range



of harmful acts such as cyberbullying, online stalking, harassment, non consensual sharing of intimate images, impersonation, threats and emotional manipulation.

These acts not only traumatise victims but also silence their voices, restrict their participation in public life and expose them to further harm offline.

The REPS further warned that perpetrators increasingly take advantage of technology to hide their identities, making it more difficult for victims to seek help or hold abusers accountable. They emphasised that law enforcement agencies are strengthening their capacity to investigate cyber related offences and urged members of the public to report cases without fear or hesitation.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Eswatini targets local power generation

ESWATINI is positioning itself to become a significant producer of electricity, with a long-term goal of generating enough power to meet national demand and sell surplus energy to South Africa. This was announced by the Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, Prince Lonkhokhela, during a signing ceremony linked to the country's coal development programme.

Trump team negotiating trade deal with Taiwan

WASHINGTON/TAIPEI — U.S. President Donald Trump's administration is negotiating a deal that could commit Taiwan to fresh investment and training of U.S. workers in semiconductor manufacturing and other advanced industries, according to five people familiar with the matter. Under the arrangement, Taiwanese companies including TSMC the world's largest contract chip-maker, would send new capital and workers to expand their U.S. operations and train U.S. workers.

Oil holds steady after one-month low

LONDON — Oil prices were steady on Wednesday after sliding to a one-month low in the previous session as investors assessed prospects of oversupply and talks over a Russia-Ukraine peace deal. Brent crude futures lost 13 cents to \$62.35 a barrel by 1315 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were down 7 cents at \$57.88.

EswatiniBank on a transformation journey

... enhancements reflect a positive step towards repositioning bank as not just a development bank, but a progressive financial partner for all



▲ EswatiniBank Managing Director Nozizwe Mulela, Board Chairperson Dumisani Mahlinza, Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg and Dr. Mteto Nyati, Chairperson Eskom, South Africa.

By Lwazi Dlamini
lwazid@rubiconmedia.group

ESWATINIBANK has invested significantly in digital innovation and creating customer-centric solutions amongst others, all with one goal: to build a modern, responsive, and inclusive financial institution that empowers emaSwati.

These were the remarks made by EswatiniBank Board of Directors Chairperson, Dumisani Mahlinza when emphasising the transformation journey by the bank.

This was during the auspicious Business Gala Dinner held at Royal Swazi Sun Convention Centre, Ezulwini on Tuesday.

"So, this evening is about enhancing connection, collaboration, and commitment towards the development of Eswatini. In this respect, Eswatini Bank has seen it fitting to bring together public and private sector representatives with a view to share ideas on how to achieve the sustainable growth and prosperity of our economy; an objective, I believe we all share," Mahlinza said.

He said the bank's digital platforms from ShareSha Digital Wallet and Agency Banking to IT modernisation and cybersecurity enhancements reflect a positive step towards repositioning Eswatini Bank as not just a development bank, but a progressive financial partner for all.

"We recognise that transformation requires investment not only in technology, but in trust, relationships, and collaboration. That is why tonight's gathering is so significant for us.

We also believe that the success of our economy is not the task of one institution, or one sector alone but it is the sum of our collective efforts," he said.



▲ Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg helping keynote Speaker Dr. Mteto Nyati dress up in lihitya during the EswatiniBank Business Gala Dinner on Tuesday.

Mahlinza added: "In this respect, every organisation represented here tonight plays a vital role in shaping the financial ecosystem that underpins our nation's progress. We therefore owe it to ourselves to harness our energies towards the growth of our economy. The simple truth is when Eswatini grows, we all grow. And Eswatini Bank, as a local financial institution, stands ready to be your trusted partner in that growth journey."

Mahlinza emphasised the importance of institutions to economic growth and prosperity and their role in allocating resources and influencing the behaviour of economic agents.

"As leaders of public enterprises, this is how we ought to see ourselves and the role that we play in society – the legislation, policies and frameworks within which we operate influence the behaviour of economic agents and ultimately play an important role in shaping the economic landscape of the country. This is no

small task, and we cannot be passive about it," he added.

Mahlinza stated that building strong institutions is a continuous exercise; which is a journey and in the fast-changing world marked by the rapid and continuous transformation of technology, politics, society and economics, often leading to uncertainty; institutions need to continuously evolve.

"Institutions need to embrace change and find opportunities to deliver services much better. They need to identify the people and skills to transform organizations. A key and often overlooked step in the process of building strong institutions is collaboration. I am reminded that economies thrive when institutions collaborate rather than operate in isolation. When each player, from regulator, financial institution to state-owned enterprise and private corporate, aligns towards a shared vision, we unlock value far beyond individual balance sheets. And tonight, that is our collective purpose: to reflect, connect, and realign and reaffirm our shared responsibility in driving national development," he said.

Mahlinza then thanked the Keynote Speaker, Dr. Mteto Nyati, Chairperson Eskom, South Africa, a visionary leader whose track record in organisations such as Microsoft and Eskom, for honouring the invite.

"Dr. Nyati's story reminds us that turnarounds are possible, that leadership can ignite renewal, and that challenges no matter how daunting can be opportunities for innovation and collective growth. We look forward to drawing lessons from his insights as we, too, journey toward organisational excellence and national impact. Ladies and gentlemen, let tonight not just be a dinner, but the beginning of new partnerships, renewed confidence, and a shared commitment to invest in our own, that is, to invest in Eswatini Bank, your bank, the people's bank," he noted.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	17.0844	17.5510
G.B. Pound	22.2302	22.9102
EURO	19.6269	20.2355
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	



▲ The Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy with the EEC executive team pose for picture.

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI is positioning itself to become a significant producer of electricity, with a long-term goal of generating enough power to meet national demand and sell surplus energy to South Africa.

This was announced by the Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, Prince Lonkhokhela, during a signing ceremony linked to the country's coal development programme.

Prince Lonkhokhela said the government's intention is to build a robust and self-sustaining energy sector capable of producing thousands of kilowatts of electricity per year.

While he did not specify the exact capacity target, he indicated that the figure under consideration is around fifteen thousand kilowatts, with the possibility of increasing the target as further studies are completed.

The Minister emphasised that Eswatini's aim is not only to meet local consumption needs but also to participate actively in the regional electricity trade.

He confirmed that Eswatini is in discussions with South Africa's Ministry of Natural Resources to establish future cross-border power supply arrangements.

"The plan is to create a system where Eswatini can export excess power to South Africa, contributing to regional energy stability while generating revenue for the country," he said.

Prince Lonkhokhela said the current regional electricity landscape makes this plan both timely and necessary. With South Africa experiencing ongoing power shortages and seeking reliable long-term supply partners, Eswatini wants to position itself as a capable producer.

"For us to be taken seriously as an energy player in the region, we must build our own capacity and ensure that our electricity comes from domestic sources," the Minister said during the ceremony.

He added that reducing reliance on imports would strengthen national security, support industrial growth and stabilise electricity tariffs.

Noteworthy, the signing ceremony marked another milestone in Eswatini's expanding energy programme, particularly around the development of the Libhuku coal mine and the proposed coal-fired power plant led by the Eswatini Electricity Company.

The Minister said the coal resource forms

Eswatini targets local power generation

... Minister outlines ambitious energy plan



▲ Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, Prince Lonkhokhela.

part of a broader national strategy to diversify power production, which currently includes hydro, solar, biomass and potential geothermal sources.

He revealed that interest in the coal project has exceeded expectations, with numerous companies already submitting applications to work with the new mine and the associated power generation facility.

These applications cover a range of activities, including mining operations, geological services, energy engineering, supply chain support, plant construction and environmental compliance.

"There has been strong interest from companies wanting to partner with us. The coal mine is attracting attention from local and international firms that recognise the economic potential in the project. This level of interest gives us confidence that the development will move forward at the pace we expect."

The Minister said the coal mining and power generation initiative forms a crucial part of the country's long-term energy mas-

ter plan.

Once operational, the project will provide a stable baseload supply, supporting industries that require uninterrupted power and ensuring that households can rely on consistent electricity.

The stability offered by baseload generation, he added, will allow Eswatini to expand its renewable energy portfolio without creating gaps in supply.

He also highlighted the economic benefits, noting that energy reliability is one of the core requirements for investment attraction. By building a dependable local power generation system, Eswatini hopes to become more competitive as a destination for manufacturing, processing and industrial enterprises.

"Eswatini currently imports the majority of its electricity from South Africa and Mozambique, a situation that places the country at the mercy of fluctuating regional markets and drought conditions that affect hydroelectric output," he said.

In addition he said, these pressures con-

tribute to tariff increases and unstable supply streams. Developing domestic generation is intended to reduce this vulnerability and give the government more control over national energy planning.

Furthermore, Prince Lonkhokhela said the government's vision also includes strengthening the national grid, enhancing transmission capabilities and preparing the system to handle both increased production and cross-border trading.

He noted that the Ministry is working closely with the Eswatini Electricity Company to align infrastructure expansion with projected production levels.

The Minister also commented on the pace of regulatory approvals linked to the coal mining licence and associated power plant.

He said government departments are finalising the remaining legal, environmental and administrative processes to ensure that the project proceeds without unnecessary delays. He stressed that compliance with environmental standards remains central to the development plan.

While large-scale coal projects are expected to support the country's baseload needs, Prince Lonkhokhela said Eswatini will continue investing in renewable energy options. Solar farms, hydropower upgrades and potential geothermal developments remain part of the national strategy, he said, adding that energy diversification is essential to future resilience.

He noted that the planned coal development is designed to exist alongside, rather than replace, renewable expansion. The aim is to build a balanced energy system capable of meeting demand regardless of weather conditions or fluctuations in regional supply.

The Minister said the government will release more details on the projected energy output targets once technical teams have completed updated feasibility assessments. He said these studies are ongoing and will inform the final structure of Eswatini's long-term energy supply plan.

Trump team negotiating trade deal with Taiwan

By Trevor Hunnicutt, Ben Blanchard and Yimou Lee

WASHINGTON/TAIPEI — U.S. President Donald Trump's administration is negotiating a deal that could commit Taiwan to fresh investment and training of U.S. workers in semiconductor manufacturing and other advanced industries, according to five people familiar with the matter.

Under the arrangement, Taiwanese companies including TSMC, the world's largest contract chipmaker, would send new capital and workers to expand their U.S. operations and train U.S. workers.

Taiwan's exports to the United States are currently subject to a 20 per cent tariff, and Taipei has been in talks to reduce that figure as part of an overarching deal with Washington. Semiconductors, vital for all kinds of high-tech products, are currently exempt from tariffs while the U.S. builds domestic capacity.

One of the people said the total U.S. investment to be pledged by Taiwan would be smaller than that of its main regional economic rivals, and would include support to help Washington build science park infrastructure drawing on Taiwanese know-how. The person and others spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

South Korea and Japan have pledged a total of \$350 billion and \$550 billion in investment in the U.S., respectively, under deals to trim U.S. tariffs on most of their goods to 15 per cent from 25 per cent.

It was unclear when the Taiwan deal would close or what specifics would make it into the final agreement, according to the people. They cautioned that any deal terms could change until they were finalized in negotiations. The workforce training aspect of the deal has not previously been reported.

"Until announced by President Trump, reporting about potential trade deals is specu-



▲ The logo of Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) is displayed at its fabrication plant in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

lation," said White House spokesman Kush Desai. The U.S. trade representative's office did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump has previously said some skilled foreign workers may be necessary to train Americans in state-of-the-art factories.

Taiwan looks to replicate its model

TSMC, which declined to comment on the trade talks, has struggled to find the right workers for its U.S. projects.

CEO and Chairman C.C. Wei said in January building the new factory in Arizona has taken at least twice as long as in Taiwan, citing a shortage of skilled workers and gaps in the supply chain. TSMC, for example, brought half of the construction workers from Texas to Arizona, increasing costs due to relocation and accommodation, he said.

Taiwan's Office of Trade Negotiations said in a statement that its team was continuing to discuss supply chain cooperation with the United States under a "Taiwan model."

Taiwan began developing its science parks, where the bulk of its semiconductor manufacturing takes place, in the 1980s, building up a whole supply chain for seamless production.

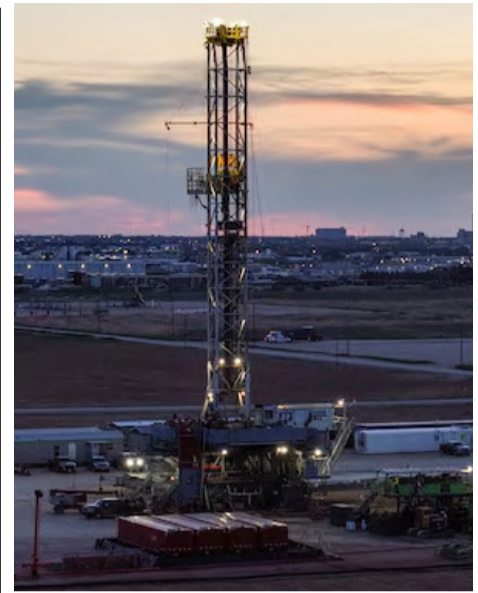
Speaking to reporters in Taipei on Wednesday, Taiwan Premier Cho Jung-tai said the two sides are at the stage of exchanging documents to firm up certain details.

"It is very difficult for other countries to do this kind of work, because only we have this concept, practice, and track record of service parks, which allows us to undertake this kind of initiative in the United States," he added.

Last month, Taiwan Vice Premier Cheng Li-chiun, who is leading talks aimed at reducing Trump's tariffs on Taiwanese exports, said she was hopeful both sides could reach a consensus on expanding investment in the United States.

While Taipei has been keen to show its commitment to Trump's call to boost U.S. manufacturing, it has also said the most advanced semiconductor technologies and research will remain on Taiwan.

Last week, Trump acknowledged criticism of programs that welcome skilled foreign workers but said doing so was necessary to dominate in key industries. In a speech at a U.S.-Saudi investment forum, Trump referenced opening up "a big plant with your friend from Taiwan, where we're going to have 40 or 50 per cent of the computer chip business." (Reuters)



▲ A drone view of a drilling rig south of Midland, Texas.

Oil holds steady after one-month low

By Enes Tunagur

LONDON — Oil prices were steady on Wednesday after sliding to a one-month low in the previous session as investors assessed prospects of oversupply and talks over a Russia-Ukraine peace deal.

Brent crude futures lost 13 cents to \$62.35 a barrel by 1315 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were down 7 cents at \$57.88.

"The market remains fundamentally skewed to the downside, with investors increasingly pricing in an oversupplied 2026 and no convincing demand catalyst to offset it," said Phillip Nova analyst Priyanka Sachdeva.

Both Brent crude and WTI settled 89 cents down on Tuesday after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy told European leaders that he was ready to advance a U.S.-backed framework for ending the war with Russia, with only a few points of disagreement remaining.

"If finalised, the deal could rapidly dismantle Western sanctions on Russian energy exports," potentially driving WTI prices to about \$55, IG market analyst Tony Sycamore said in a client note.

"For now, the market waits for more clarity, but the risk appears to be for lower prices unless talks falter."

U.S. President Donald Trump said he directed his representatives to meet separately with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian officials. A Ukrainian official said Zelenskiy could visit the U.S. in the next few days to finalise a deal.

Britain, Europe and the U.S. have tightened sanctions on Russia recently and Indian purchases of Russian oil are set to hit their lowest for three years in December.

On the supply side, OPEC+ is likely to leave output levels unchanged at its meeting on Sunday, three OPEC+ sources told Reuters on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, The Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) said it resumed oil loadings overnight, having suspended loadings after a Ukrainian drone attack earlier in the week. U.S. crude stocks fell last week while fuel inventories rose, market sources said on Tuesday, citing American Petroleum Institute figures.

Official stockpile data from the Energy Information Administration is due on Wednesday. (Reuters)

Stocks head higher, gilts and sterling steel for bruising budget

By Marc Jones

LONDON — Growing U.S. rate cut bets lifted world stocks for a fourth straight day on Wednesday, while in Europe hopes were growing for a Ukraine peace deal and UK markets were bracing for a bruising budget later.

Europe's early 0.2 per cent-0.4 per cent gains echoed the day's 0.3 per cent rise for MSCI's world stocks index as gains in Asia, and from Wall Street, extended this week's easing of recent AI and tech jitters.

Focus was already turning to the UK budget, expected to begin around 1230 GMT, for what will be a high-wire act for its under-pressure government and finance minister Rachel Reeves. Little more than a year after ordering 40 billion pounds (\$52.7 billion) of tax hikes - the biggest since the 1990s and which she promised would be a one-off - Reeves is expected to pile on another 20-30 billion pounds of increases to try and plug the fiscal dam.



▲ The German share price index DAX graph is pictured at the stock exchange in Frankfurt, Germany.

Traders preempted it all by nudging sterling to \$1.3170, although investors in UK government bonds, the FTSE 100 and FTSE 350 were all waiting nervously to see how much gets raised and who pays for it.

"Bond markets will be watching very closely, ultimately being the arbiter as to whether the Chancellor has done enough to put the country's debt on a sustainable

path," said Oliver Faizallah, Head of Fixed Income Research at Charles Stanley.

The day's other main moves saw the yen, which has been on a downward spiral in recent weeks, rally 0.2 per cent against the U.S. dollar as sources told Reuters the Bank of Japan is preparing markets for a possible rate hike as soon as next month.

That would shift the central bank to more hawkish ground and comes after a meeting last week between new Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and BOJ Governor Kazuo Ueda.

Takaichi's high approval ratings are also prompting Japanese opposition parties to ramp up preparations for snap elections, the Yomiuri newspaper reported on Wednesday.

The kiwi dollar surged 1.2 per cent after the Reserve Bank of New Zealand cut interest rates 25 basis points to 2.25 per cent, but removed its dovish guidance, signalling an end to the central bank's easing cycle.

Its antipodean neighbour, the Aussie dollar, jumped 0.5 per cent too after a hotter-than-expected inflation report reinforced bets that rate cuts are over for the time being there as well. (Reuters)



Congratulations

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and the entire **Lidwala Insurance family**, we wish to congratulate our **MD Dr Thokozani Nkambule**, on his successful completion of **Advanced Management Program School**. We are proud of you and excited for the future of Lidwala Insurance under your guided leadership. Wishing you all the best!



VUSIMUZI ‘Cat’ Matlala has reluctantly explained how his company, Medicare24 Tshwane District, was awarded the R360 million South African Police Service (Saps) health services contract.

Matlala appeared before Parliament’s ad hoc committee on Wednesday, which has now moved to the Kgosi Mampuru Correctional Centre in Pretoria.

While the contract was advertised for R360 million, R600 million was available in the Saps budget, according to a News24 report.

On Tuesday, Saps chief financial officer (CFO), Lieutenant-General Puleng Dimpene, told the committee that the contract was flagged as a possible irregular expenditure in the first week of March 2024 and confirmed as irregular in May.

R466 million was disclosed as irregular expenditure. A few invoices remain in the system for this tender; however, Dimpene has instructed her team to stop the payments.

After matric, Matlala ventured into “informal business”, buying and selling goods. In 2001, he was arrested for buying “stuff which was illegal” and sentenced to four years in prison. The sentence was converted to a correctional supervision.

In 2017, he formally registered his first business, which is a security business. Matlala provided security services to the late Pretoria taxi boss Jothan ‘Mswazi’ Msibi’s farm.

He met Deputy National Police Commissioner Shadrack Sibiyi at Msibi’s farm, where Sibiyi was a “regular”.

He then ventured into the healthcare business in 2018.

The idea of Medicare24 Tshwane District came through Mike van Wyk, who lives on

Matlala explains how he got R360m Saps tender

the same estate as him.

Matlala then went on to rent a hospital on the Saps training academy in Pretoria West in December 2023, months before securing the tender in June 2024.

He told the committee the timing of the two events was coincidental. He saw a business opportunity to service the police trainees and took it.

“That hospital, I’ve been trying to secure the lease for, I think, for the past three years. So when they say, you know, you are about to get a tender, for me, that does not add up. I can remember that my first engagement with Public Works was somewhere around 2021. And that was far from the tender being even advertised,” said Matlala.

“So, I just learned that the students who are being trained by the college sometimes get injuries, or even when they seek help, they have to go to the nearest hospital, which is outside the premises of Saps. So I wanted to use that hospital as an opportunity for them to render the services to them.”

The deal between Matlala and Van Wyk is between a franchisor and its franchisee, with Van Wyk owning Medicare24 Holdings.

The agreement was that Matlala would register his company under Medicare24 Holdings and pay a management fee to the company on every contract secured by Medicare24 Tshwane District.

On why Van Wyk approached Matlala, he explained: “He first asked me, what do I do for a living? And I told him that, besides the



▲ Vusimuzi ‘Cat’ Matlala appeared before Parliament’s ad hoc committee on Wednesday, which has now moved to the Kgosi Mampuru Correctional Centre in Pretoria.

security thing, I do RFQs, meaning I supply medical equipment to hospitals. So then, when I mentioned the hospitals, maybe that’s when I got his attention, because he’s also into healthcare. Then he told me we want to send proposals to manage the clinics in the townships.

“But since you are black and maybe you can have a much more advantage than us, so why don’t you register the company for yourself? And then you get the business, we handle the management, and then you can take the rest.”

(The Citizen)

South Sudan again shakes up petroleum ministry, adding to constant govt churn

SOUTH Sudan President Salva Kiir has sacked Deng Lual Wol as the petroleum ministry’s undersecretary and replaced him with Chol Thon Abel, the fourth time he has transferred the post from one of the men to the other in less than two months.

Kiir has repeatedly sacked and then reinstated - and sometimes sacked again - senior officials without explanation. Analysts say the tactic is aimed at maintaining control and rewarding loyalists in the face of increasing armed conflict this year between government forces and various militia, and amid speculation about his eventual succession.

The state broadcaster announced the shake-up at the petroleum ministry on Tuesday evening, without giving any explanation, as is usual with such personnel changes.

It was not immediately possible to contact a government spokesperson for comment.

Crude oil sales account for the vast majority of South Sudan’s revenues but exports have plunged due to damage to pipelines caused by the civil war in neighbouring Sudan.

Kiir first sacked Thon as undersecretary, which is the number two position at the ministry and is responsible for financial transactions, and replaced him with Lual in October.

He then reinstated Thon on November 3 before again replacing him with Lual a week later.

Kiir also dismissed Ayuel Ngor Kacgor on Tuesday as managing director of the state-owned oil firm Nilepet.

Gizam Moses, an independent policy



▲ South Sudan President Salva Kiir Mayardit.

analyst in governance and natural resources, said the constant turnover within government ministries encouraged corruption as officials would seek personal gain if they felt their tenure in posts was limited.

U.N. investigators said in September that political elites have engaged in “systematic looting of the nation’s wealth for private gain”, with little of the government’s revenues going to health, education or food security. (Reuters)

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You have read the rest. now read the best

France's highest court upholds Sarkozy conviction in 2012 campaign financing case

FRANCE'S highest court on Wednesday upheld former President Nicolas Sarkozy's conviction for illegal campaign financing in his failed 2012 re-election bid, his latest legal setback after recently being jailed for nearly a month in another case.

Sarkozy, who served one term as president from 2007 to 2012, was convicted in 2021 and again in 2024 for illegal campaign financing related to the election.

Following an appeal, France's Cour de Cassation on Wednesday confirmed the convictions, saying that illegal campaign financing had been established. It upheld Sarkozy's one-year non-custodial sentence, half of which is suspended.

In a statement, Sarkozy's lawyers said their client was considering bringing the case to the European Court of Human Rights.

The ruling comes after Sarkozy, 70, was

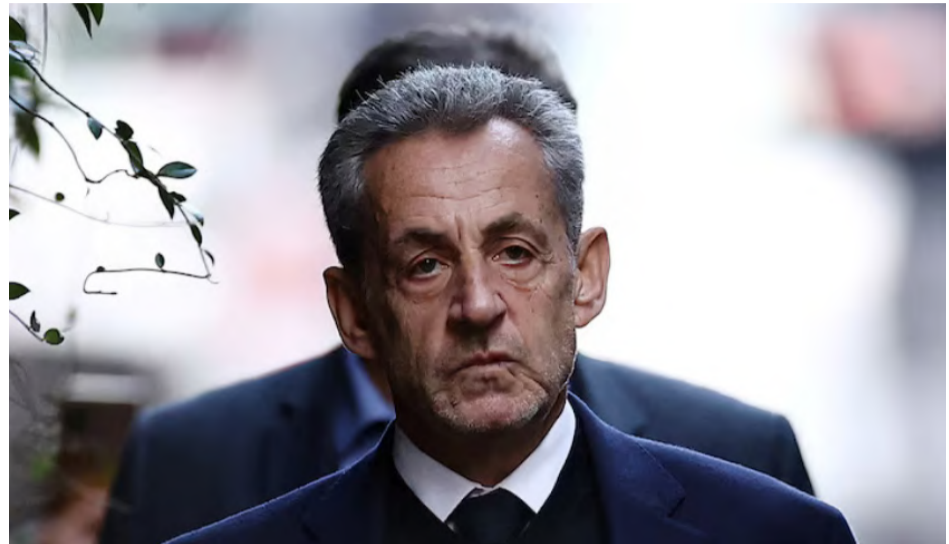
sent to prison on October 21 after he was found guilty in a separate case for efforts by close aides to procure Libyan funds for his 2007 presidential bid. He was freed from jail earlier this month, pending appeal.

Sarkozy has denied accusations that his party Les Republicains, then known as the UMP, in 2012 spent nearly double the 22.5 million euros (\$26 million) allowed under electoral law on extravagant campaign rallies and then hired a friendly public relations firm to hide the cost.

He has said he was not involved in the logistics of his campaign or in how money was spent in the run-up to the election.

The 2021 ruling said Sarkozy was made aware of the overspending, that he did not act on it, and that it was not necessary for him to approve each individual expense to be responsible.

(Reuters)



▲ Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy leaves his house on the day of his incarceration at the Sante prison to begin his five-year prison sentence for criminal conspiracy over attempts to raise campaign funds from Libya, in Paris, France.



▲ Medical crew carry a patient who is in critical condition, on a stretcher, as they transfer them to a military helicopter from Hat Yai Hospital to Songklanagarind Hospital, amid heavy flooding in Hat Yai district, which was affected by heavy rainfall impacting several provinces in southern Thailand and killing several people, in Songkhla province, Thailand.



Thailand airlifts patients, rushes supplies as floods in south kill 33

THREE days of torrential rain starting last week dumped record volumes on Hat Yai, Thailand's southern commercial hub, flooding hospitals and stranding thousands on rooftops. On Friday, the city received 335 mm of rain, its highest in a single day for 300 years.

The Thai military has mobilised boats, helicopters and even its lone aircraft carrier to deliver supplies and evacuate the sick.

Extreme weather events can become more frequent as a result of global warming, with higher sea surface temperatures supercharging tropical storms.

"There have been 33 deaths across seven provinces," Thai government spokesperson Siripong Angkasakulkiat said in Bangkok. "Causes of death include being swept away by currents, drowning, electrocution, and landslides."

Without electricity, parts of the city were still in darkness late on Wednesday and swamped by almost waist-high swirling brown water, according to a Reuters journalist.

Rescue workers pushed boats through flooded neighbourhoods, some of them loaded with residents pulled out of their homes.

In an update on social media, provincial authorities said that flood waters in many areas were gradually receding but currents remain strong, hindering rescue operations.

The Thai military has pressed some 200 boats and 20 helicopters into service in the area, and authorities have received appeals for help from around 77,000 people through social media channels, according to Siripong.

Military helicopters dropped supplies to residents gathered on rooftops, some of them waving for help. Other aircraft flew into the area with generators, oxygen tanks and water, social media posts by the air force and navy showed.

Thailand's only aircraft carrier, Chakri Naruebet, which set out from its home port on Tuesday, had joined the relief effort, providing air support, the navy said.

The government made a public call for equipment, including boats and jet skis.

Three consecutive days of downpours since last Wednesday dumped 630 mm (24.8 inches) of rain around Hat Yai, higher than a previous peak of 428 mm in 2010, according to the country's Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency.

The weather system has moved away towards the Strait of Malacca and intensified into a tropical cyclone that will move

towards Indonesia, the Thai Meteorological Department said.

Floods have affected more than 980,000 homes and over 2.7 million people in Thailand, the interior ministry said.

Flood waters had inundated the first floor of Hat Yai's main government hospital treating 600 patients, around 50 of them in intensive care, public health ministry official Somrerak Chungsamran told Reuters.

"Today, all intensive care patients will be transported out of Hat Yai Hospital," he said.

At another hospital, an army helicopter evacuated a critically ill elderly woman, who was surrounded by medical staff on the aircraft then wheeled away from the rooftop helipad of another facility, according to a handout video.

In Kangar, the capital of Malaysia's Perlis state, which borders Thailand, workers moved patients out of the Tuanku Fauziah Hospital on gurneys through knee-high water, according to a Reuters journalist.

Despite the push by Thailand's military, which took over relief efforts on Tuesday, some residents of Hat Yai and surrounding areas who were still waiting to be rescued posted desperate pleas on social media.

Auntita Taechinchotikan, 33, who lives in Bangkok, had only managed to make contact

with her stranded brother and his family early on Wednesday.

"I've tried contacting every rescue team, and they've all responded, but no one has been able to reach the house," she told Reuters. Ten family members were trapped in two buildings in Hat Yai, including her parents and young children, said Auntita.

"If they can't take them out, then at least send supplies," she said. "I don't know how much food they have left to survive."

(Reuters)

There have been 33 deaths across seven provinces," Thai government spokesperson Siripong Angkasakulkiat said in Bangkok. "Causes of death include being swept away by currents, drowning, electrocution, and landslide



▲ An ice cream made by Scoops N Giggles' Zandile Mabaso at Gelateria De' Coltelli, Italy, during her classes.

▲ Zandile Mabaso (C) with her mentors in Italy.



Scoops N Giggles goes to Italy

Stories by Delisa Magagula

SCOOPS N Giggles has added a touch of Italian glamour to its story after founder Zandile Mabaso returned from a vibrant, flavour-filled mentorship in Pisa, Italy.

The ice cream maker spent ten days learning the art of world-class gelato production at the award-winning Gelateria De' Coltelli, an experience that blended hard work, creativity, and a dash of European charm. According to Zandile, the trip was more than a skills exchange. It was a playful, colourful immersion into Italy's gelato culture, where each day brought new techniques, new flavours, and new ideas for growing her Eswatini brand.

Surrounded by expert gelato makers, she sharpened her craft and explored how to elevate Scoops N Giggles into a larger, modern operation back home.

"I am delighted to bring home a wealth of knowledge and new skills from Pisa.

Being able to train under some of the best people in the world is something I never imagined possible," she said. Away from the machinery and recipe books, Zandile also soaked in the energy of the city, drawing inspiration from the warm palettes, artistic food culture and the effortless Italian love for all things sweet.

Experience

It was the kind of experience that leaves a person buzzing with ideas, and she returned home ready to stir Scoops N Giggles into its next chapter.

She is now working on setting up a certified cottage factory with stronger production systems that will allow her to supply supermarkets, hotels, and bigger commercial clients.

With improved processes and new techniques acquired in Italy, she is positioning her ice cream line to compete confidently in the wider market.

Meanwhile the European Union, which supported the mentorship along with the International Trade Centre, applauded Zandile's dedication and ambition.

"The European Union is proud to support young and ambitious entrepreneurs who are ready to transform their skills into competitive businesses. Zandile's journey shows how access to global expertise can unlock new opportunities for Eswatini's MSMEs," said EU Head of Cooperation, Eva-Maria Engdahl.

Her mentorship formed part of the Eswatini Promoting growth through competitive alliances programme, implemented by the International Trade Centre in partnership with the European Union and the Government of Eswatini.

The programme focuses on helping small businesses, artisans and farmers become competitive players in regional and international markets.

For Scoops N Giggles, the journey has only just begun. With fresh knowledge, boosted confidence, and a sprinkle of Italian finesse, Zandile is gearing up to turn her ice cream into one of Eswatini's standout treats.

Zandile mentioned that, the mentorship may have taken place thousands of kilometres away, but its impact is already stirring excitement at home. And if her plans are anything to go by, Eswatini ice cream lovers may soon find themselves tasting flavours with a little hint of Pisa woven in.



▲ Zandile of Scoop N Giggles making ice cream in Italy.

Glamour honours Zee Nxumalo with Editor's choice award

ESWATINI'S rising star, Zee Nxumalo, has added a major milestone to her fast-growing career after receiving the Editor's Choice recognition at the Glamour Women of the Year Awards.

The ceremony, held at the iconic Summer Place in Johannesburg on November 22, honoured women who continue to shape culture, break boundaries, and influence the creative landscape.

For Zee, the award marks another step in a journey that began long before the spotlight found her. Known for her smooth vocals, youthful energy and confident storytelling, she has carved out a space in the music industry with a sound that blends Afropop, soul and contemporary urban influences.

Her breakout moments came through collaborations and singles that quickly gained traction, earning her a loyal following across Eswatini and South Africa.

Over the past few years, she has grown

from a promising newcomer into one of the region's most exciting young voices, performing on major stages, releasing hit tracks, and establishing her name in a competitive industry.

Zee's background is rooted in a passion for performing that started early. From school stages to professional studios, she has consistently pushed her craft forward with each release.

Aspirational

Her music often carries themes of youth, empowerment and self-expression, resonating widely with fans who see her as both relatable and aspirational. As her profile has grown, so has her influence, making her a standout among the new generation of Southern African musicians shaping today's sound. Noteworthy the Glamour Women of the Year Awards are known for spotlighting accomplished women across entertainment, business, fashion, arts and innovation. This year's

event followed the global edition, which honoured notable talents including Tyla, Demi Moore and Pat McGrath.

The Johannesburg ceremony continued that momentum by recognising women who are shifting narratives and driving creativity in their respective fields.

Zee's recognition places her among a prestigious group of honorees celebrated for their impact and growing contribution to the region's cultural movement. Her achievement at Summer Place highlighted her rising stature and the increasing visibility of Eswatini talent across the continent.

While she continues to build her career, Zee's trajectory shows no signs of slowing down. With a growing catalogue, expanding audience and a new accolade to her name, she is positioned for even bigger moments ahead. The Glamour honour adds to her momentum and cements her status as one of the brightest young artists to watch.



▲ Zee Nxumalo.

Stories by Delisa Magagula

KFC partners with Eswatini Lifestyle Awards

KFC Eswatini has been announced as the latest sponsor of the Eswatini Lifestyle Awards, adding significant momentum to the newly rebranded event set for November 29, 2025, at Mavuso Trade Centre.

The announcement was made by the event's founder and director, Jumbo Khumalo, who shared the news through his official Facebook page.

"Breaking news, KFC Eswatini has sponsored Eswatini Lifestyle Awards. No words can describe this happiness. Look at God," Khumalo posted, marking a major milestone in the event's journey.

The sponsorship comes at a transformative time for the awards, which recently evolved from the long-running Jumbo Festival into the Eswatini Lifestyle Awards.

Focus

The shift aims to strengthen the event's focus on recognising excellence across Eswatini's lifestyle sectors, including business, leadership, fashion, culture, and creativity.

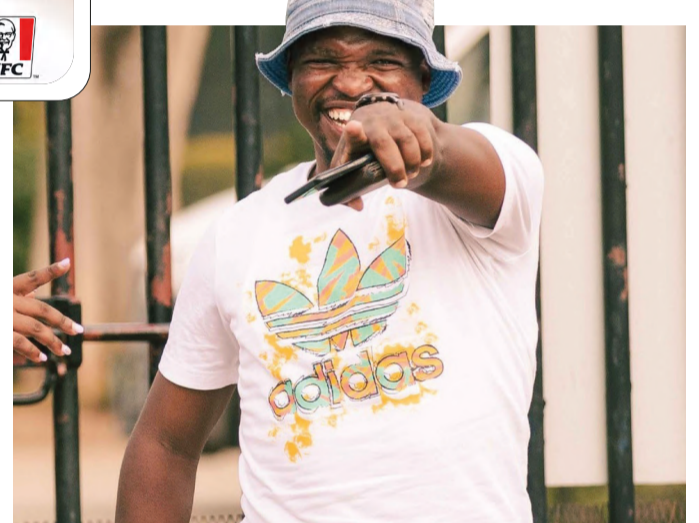
Worth mentioning, this year's ceremony has already generated strong public interest, with 80 per cent of tickets sold out. The programme will open with a red-carpet experience from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm, followed by a karaoke warm-up session before the main awards run until 10:00 pm.

General tickets are priced at E250, while VIP tickets cost E350 and offer premium seating along with enhanced hospitality.

Khumalo noted that the partnership with KFC Eswatini underscores the growing stature of the event as a platform that celebrates both emerging and established figures shaping the country's lifestyle landscape.



▲ MC Mncobi Tsabedze and his date at the most recent Eswatini Lifestyle Awards.



▲ Eswatini Lifestyle Awards Director Jumbo Khumalo.

Sarnilo's Makuwalala EP gains momentum with rising streams

SARNILO'S latest project, the Makuwalala EP, is enjoying strong early reception, earning more than eight hundred views on YouTube and surpassing one thousand combined streams across major music platforms.

The roll-out marks another step forward for the Mbabane-born artist, whose steady rise continues to draw attention within Eswatini and beyond.

Makuwalala is a six-track EP that blends soul, Afro-fusion and expressive storytelling. The project captures themes of transition, reflection and emotional growth, giving listeners a deeper look into Sarnilo's evolving sound.

Its title, which symbolises the onset of dusk or a period of change, mirrors the tone of the music. Each track moves between smooth melodies and warm rhythms, creating a cohesive body of work that shows her range as both a vocalist and a writer.

The EP features collaborations with a mix of producers and artists who help shape its overall feel. One of the most anticipated songs, 'Don't Be Shy', includes a feature from Nana Magagula, a respected figure in Eswatini's music landscape. Their collaboration connects different generations of artistry, adding weight to the project's identity.

Noteworthy, Makuwalala's strong early numbers add to Sarnilo's growing list of achievements. She began writing music at a young age, starting with poetry and choir performances before transitioning into the contemporary sound she is known for today. Her ability to move between singing,

rapping and spoken word has earned her a reputation for versatility. Over the years, she has worked on singles, collaborations and performances that have shaped her identity as a rising creative force.

Her breakthrough moment came when she was selected as part of Spotify's Fresh Finds Africa class of twenty twenty-four, becoming the first artist from Eswatini to receive the recognition.

The programme introduced her to a wider audience and placed her among promising talents across the continent. Her track Addict, featuring Mzwaa, was included in the Fresh Finds Africa playlist, giving her international exposure and reinforcing her position as one of the country's most promising voices.

Achievement

Following the playlist achievement, she represented Eswatini at the Spotify Africa Writing Camp in Cape Town.

The experience allowed her to work with producers from across the region and contributed to the creation of tracks that expanded her catalogue. These milestones helped set the foundation for Makuwalala, which now continues that momentum.

The EP's early performance reflects listeners' interest in her new direction and the support she continues to gather. With YouTube views climbing and streaming numbers rising across platforms, Makuwalala is positioning itself as one of Sarnilo's standout projects. The response also signals growing appreciation for Eswatini artists who are shaping new sounds for the region. As Makuwalala gains more attention, Sarnilo continues building a



▼ Sarnilo.

career grounded in originality, consistency and musical evolution. The EP adds another

chapter to her journey and strengthens her presence in the regional music scene.

Six more charges added in Shebeshxt case

LOT Ramusi, the legal representative of wayward Lekompo music artist Lehlogonolo “Shebeshxt” Chauke, will have to up his game if he hopes to secure bail for his client when the controversial musician appears in the Polokwane High Court on Thursday.

Ramusi admitted that he was caught off guard when the court announced that six additional charges from previous incidents would be added to the current attempted murder case faced by the Lebowakgomoborn artist.

“I was not aware of the previous charges and their merit. I still need to consult with Chauke to get clarity. And I needed more time to study these added cases. So that we can see whether the state has a tight case against my client,” said Ramusi. He said his intention is to secure bail for the musician. And he argued that Chauke stands to lose significantly if he remains behind bars.

Fully booked festive season gigs
“He has a lot to lose if he doesn’t get bail. As you might know that he is one of the most fully booked artists for performances throughout the festive season,” he added. The six outstanding charges that the state has merged with Shebeshxt’s current attempted murder docket include three counts of attempted murder, possession of

an unlicensed firearm, malicious damage to property and robbery with intent to cause bodily harm. A warrant of arrest linked to these charges was issued in 2023, and remained active.

“I will need to go through each and every charge so that I understand the merit of each one. [Then] we can determine whether the state’s case is weak or lacks substance,” said Ramusi. He described the state’s decision to add the charges as an “ambush”.

The 30-year-old musician’s latest case stems from a shooting incident on October 19. This happened along Witklip Street in Ladanna, outside Polokwane.

Attempted murder charge
Police spokesperson Colonel Malesela Ledwaba previously reported that the suspect allegedly got involved in an argument with another driver before firing multiple shots at the victim’s vehicle. A 34-year-old man sustained serious injuries and was rushed to hospital.

The case was initially opened at Westernburg SAPS. But it was later transferred to the Provincial Investigation Unit for further probing. Police secured a warrant on Tuesday and executed it the following day. During the operation, officers also seized two of the suspect’s vehicles for forensic analysis.

(Sunday World)



▲ Lekompo music artist Lehlogonolo “Shebeshxt” Chauke is in deep trouble.

50 Cent’s Diddy documentary release date announced

NETFLIX has confirmed the release date for Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson’s four-part documentary series on Sean “Diddy” Combs, marking the latest turn in a project that has drawn attention since it was first announced.

“Sean Combs: The Reckoning” is the title of the series set to debut on Tuesday, December 2. It will explore the extensive list of allegations against Combs, as well as the broader cultural environment that fostered his career.

Interest in the project began in December 2023 when news broke that Jackson was developing a documentary on the sexual assault and abuse allegations facing Combs.

By March, Jackson confirmed the production, teasing an imminent release as further legal developments increased anticipation. The documentary was originally called “Diddy Do It?”

The streaming platform secured rights to the series after a competitive bid. Completion brought new insights and a revised title reflecting ongoing legal changes, such as Combs’ federal conviction and prison sentence.

(IOL)

Gospel, Maskandi stars fight over hit song ownership

AWARD-WINNING Gospel artist, composer, and Kunendaba Communications founder Senzo Khumalo has accused Maskandi artist Khuzani Mpungose of stealing the melody, composition, and lyrics from his song titled Nisheshe Nangihlelela, which he released in 2020.

War over hit song

Mpungose released his 21-track album Inhlanhla Izanebhadi on Friday, November 21. In the project, he features the number seven song, Nisheshe Nangijaja, featuring Luvu Dubazane. He is credited as the artist and composer.

Khumalo, who has written music for the likes of award-winning artists Dumi Mkokstad, Thinah Zungu, Sgwili, and Lindani Gumede, tells Sunday World that the song’s melody, lyrics, and composition were taken from his 2020 release titled Nisheshe nangihlelela. What irks him the most are the “slight lyrics adjustments that Khuzani made to make it seem as though it was his own,” he said.

“At just 30 seconds into listening to the song, I could tell it was my song. The melody, the lyrics, and in certain parts that he makes changes. But the song is almost exactly the same.”

Disappointed at the disregard

Khumalo is not surprised, but he is disappointed at Mpungose.

“These things happen when a person is not very knowledgeable about the music business and music rights. They tend to think they can do as they please with people’s creative work,” Khumalo said “But I have written for many known and unknown

artists. That is how I make a living, through composing for others, and I know how it is done. All he needed to do was make a call and ask to re-do the song, and we do the paperwork. And I would get credited where necessary. Now we have to involve other people and lawyers. And it has now become a tedious exercise that I am willing to partake in.”

Khumalo explained that many other artists have re-done his songs. But they went about it “through the right channels.”

“Thinah Zungu asked that he re-do one of my songs in 2017, and I granted him permission. We did the paperwork, and he credited me for writing and arrangement. It’s easy to work with each other as artists. What makes Khuzani think he cannot do the same?” Weighing legal options

Khumalo said they have met Khuzani on several occasions.

“We are not friends, but we know each other as musicians. We have met face-to-face once or twice. First at a funeral, where we had a chat, and another time in the football sports grounds,” he said.

“I know he listens to my music because I have seen him play it on a Facebook live.” Khumalo is sure that Mpungose heard the song and deliberately chose not to reach out to him.

“I know he listens to my music. After getting calls and messages from people asking me to listen to the song, I did not reach out to him. Because that was his duty to call me before the release and ask for consent. He can’t take the song and then make it my responsibility to call him.”

Khumalo said he is not one to engage in conflicts. However, he needs to

see this through so it does not happen in the future and to other artists.

“I am still consulting with my legal team for the best suitable way forward. I just hope it will not drag on. The problem is that Khuzani doesn’t understand the consequences and thinks there are people ganging up on him. It’s a serious case. I was hoping he would understand and reach out, but I just hope the record label would understand,” he said.

will not allow anyone to take my craft and claim it as their own.”

Khuzani’s management and publicity team said he refused to “entertain” the negativity. He had no interest in responding to the matter. (Sunday World)

Mpungose uninterested in matter

“There is proof, no one is trying to bring him down. I am a big fan, but I



▲ Maskandi artist Khuzani Mpungose.



Your Fabulous Feet

THEY'RE easy to take for granted, but it's hard to get anywhere without them.

And when they hurt, it can be tough to concentrate on anything else. So pamper your feet to keep them at their best.

Keep an Eye on Them

Your feet take a beating every day, and small problems can turn into big ones if you ignore them. Look over your feet each day for cuts, sores, loose or discolored toenails, swelling, or rashes.

Wash Them

When you're walking, they're working -- and they sweat, too. When the cracks and crevices between your toes are trapped in your shoes, they're a warm, moist place that's ideal for fungus. And that can lead to things like athlete's foot. When you wash your feet, the water shouldn't be too hot -- between 90 and 95 degrees is best -- and don't forget to get between your toes.

Keep Them Dry

This may seem obvious, but many people don't dry their feet the right way. It's not just the tops and bottoms: You should get between your toes -- where fungus is most likely to cause problems.

Use Powder

After you dry your feet, sprinkle cornstarch or talcum powder on them to help keep them dry. If you have athlete's foot or some other infection, you can try special medicated foot powders that help with itching, too.

Don't Soak Them

It may feel good at the time, but soaking your feet for long periods can lead to dry, cracked skin that can cause pain, sores, and even infection. Wash, dry, powder, and repeat -- and leave it at that. Save the soaking for your beans.

Keep Them Soft

Lotion, cream, petroleum jelly -- whatever moisturizer you prefer -- put a thin coat of it on the tops and bottoms of your feet. Make sure to rub it all the way in and skip between your toes, where too much moisture can cause trouble.

Trim Your Toenails

You want to cut them straight across. You can smooth the corners with an emery board or nail file, but don't angle them. That can cause your toenails to grow into your skin, which is painful and can lead to infection. Have a foot doctor trim them if you can't see, reach, or feel your feet, or your toenails are thick, yellowed, or grown into your skin.

Keep Blood Flowing

Wiggle your toes a couple of times a day for 5 minutes at a time. Move your ankles around to help even more. Don't cross your legs for long periods or wear tight socks -- that can mess with your blood flow.



● **When you need a new pair, it's best to try them on at the end of the day, when your feet are largest. Make sure that there's plenty of room for your toes and that they fit when you get them -- don't expect them to "stretch out."**

Stretch Your Feet

Foot stretches and massage -- with a ball or roller -- are good for your feet and can help manage painful conditions like plantar fasciitis, an injury to the sole of your foot that comes from overuse. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist about which stretches are right for you.

Smooth Corns and Calluses

You can use a special kind of stone called pumice on these. After you bathe or shower, rub the stone gently over the area. Don't cut them or use corn plasters, "liquid corn," or callus removers -- they can cause infection. If you have this done as part of a pedicure at a salon, make sure the footbaths and tools

are clean and that the technician washes their hands between clients.

Get the Right Shoes

When you need a new pair, it's best to try them on at the end of the day, when your feet are largest. Make sure that there's plenty of room for your toes and that they fit when you get them -- don't expect them to "stretch out." And as pretty as they are, high heels and shoes with pointed toes are really hard on your feet.

Be Active

Just a few minutes of activity a day can help your blood flow, which can lead to healthier feet. You don't have to run a



marathon, unless you really want to. Walking, biking, swimming, dancing -- even gardening -- will work. Get the right kind of supportive shoes for your activity, and ask your doctor if you're not sure what's right for you.

Protect Them From the Elements

Keep your feet safe from the hot pavement in the summer with sandals or shoes, and protect them from sunburn. Many people overlook the top of their feet when they put on sunscreen, but that's a common place to get a burn. In the cold of winter, lined boots are your feet's best friend.

Special Care: Diabetes

It's even more important to take care of your feet if you have diabetes, especially if you have pain, numbness, changes in the shape of your feet, or sores that don't heal. The condition lowers blood flow and can damage nerves in your feet. You may need to talk with a foot doctor -- a podiatrist -- to make sure you're doing all you can for them.

WebMD

Yoga for depression, anxiety

YOU know that exercise is good for you, but depression and anxiety can zap your energy and make it harder to get active.

Yoga can be another way to work movement into your routine and feel better.

In general, yoga's benefits may include less stress, a lower heart rate, and lower blood pressure.

Keep in mind that yoga doesn't replace other types of depression or anxiety treatment. Your doctor may suggest it and other types of exercise along with your treatment plan, which could include therapy and/or medication. Don't stop other treatments without consulting with your doctor, psychiatrist, or therapist.

What the Research Shows

Studies show that yoga also may help people who have depression, but its effect on anxiety disorders isn't clear.

A review of studies found that people with a variety of mental health disorders who did "physically active" yoga for an average of 60 minutes, once or twice a week, for about 2.5 months had fewer depressive symptoms. Yoga styles were considered physically active if they had people moving for at least half of the class time and focused on specific body movements (asana), breathing (pranayama), and/or mindfulness (including meditation).

Researchers still need to learn more about how yoga reduces depressive symptoms and if specific styles of yoga and poses work better than others.

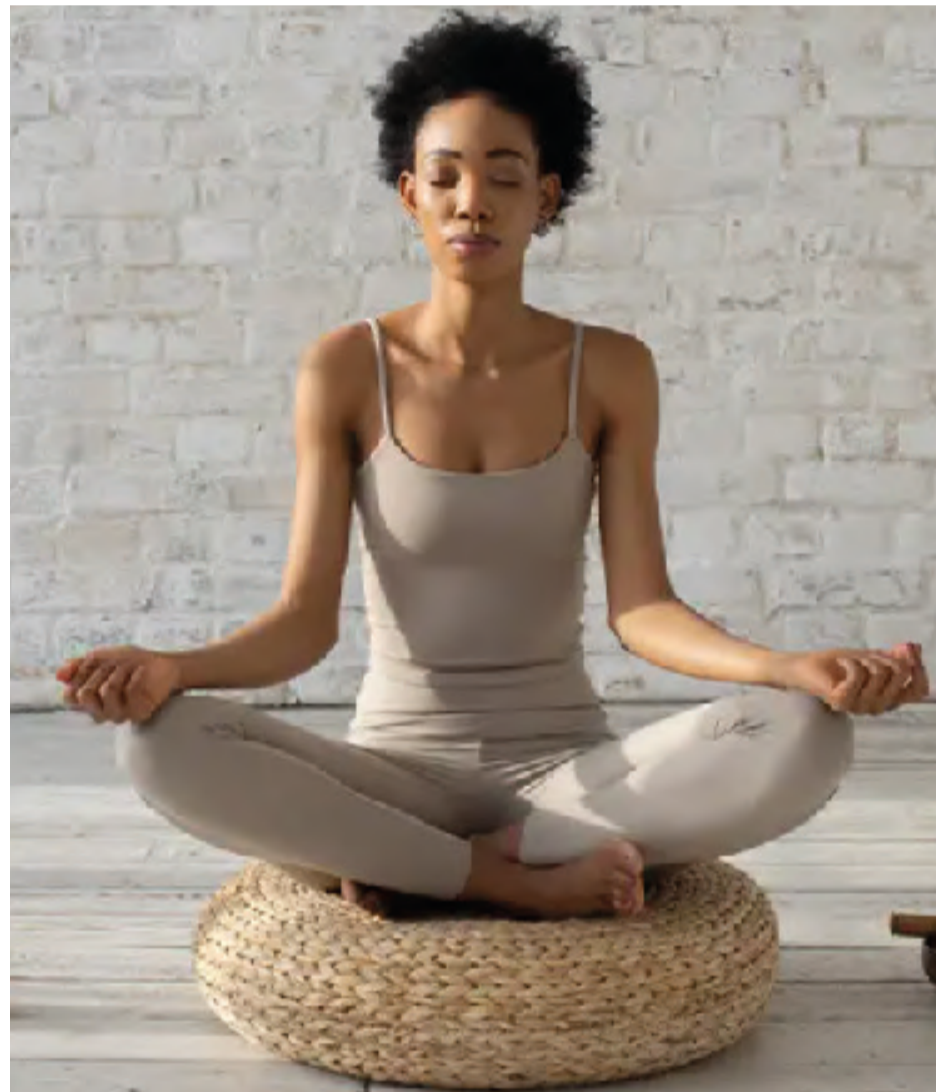
How to Get Started With Yoga

If you haven't exercised regularly in a while, you should be able to add light to moderate movement to your routine without talking to your doctor. If you're older than 50, have a medical condition, or are pregnant, check with your doctor before you start a new exercise routine.

The Right Yoga Class for You

Yoga comes in many styles, so read the class description before you sign up. Iyengar, Bikram, and Hatha are three popular types of yoga that focus on physical poses, breathing techniques, and meditation.

You can look for a class for beginners at a local gym, yoga studio, community center, or place of worship. You can always ask an instructor if you may preview a class to see if you'd be comfortable taking it. If you prefer online sessions, those are also a good way to



see if a class style works for you -- and there are lots of online options.

When you take a class, let the teacher know about any of your concerns or physical limits. The instructor should help you adjust poses as needed.

Researchers don't know if there is an ideal amount of yoga to do, but one hour-long class a week could be a good place to start. If that's too much, start with a few poses and build your practice slowly. Research suggests that the more yoga sessions you do a week, the more your depressive or anxiety symptoms may ease. But as with any activity, don't overdo it.

Stay in tune with how your body and mind feel during and after a yoga class. Physically, yoga may be a challenge but shouldn't hurt. If you feel sad, stressed, or like you don't have any energy after a class, that type might not work for you. You can try other styles of classes until you find the right fit.

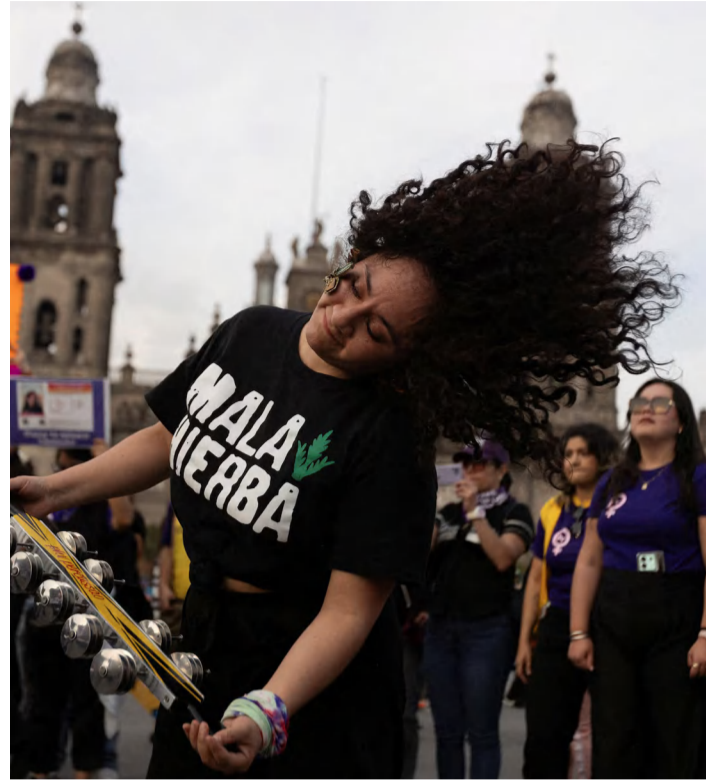
WebMD

● **Yoga comes in many styles, so read the class description before you sign up. Iyengar, Bikram, and Hatha are three popular types of yoga that focus on physical poses, breathing techniques, and meditation.**

Around the world in pictures



▲ Wong, 71, reacts after claiming his wife is trapped inside Wang Fuk Court during a major fire, in Tai Po, Hong Kong, China.



▲ Women take part in a protest to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, in Mexico City, Mexico.



▲ Wong, 71, reacts after claiming his wife is trapped inside Wang Fuk Court during a major fire, in Tai Po, Hong Kong, China.



▲ Wong, 71, reacts after claiming his wife is trapped inside Wang Fuk Court during a major fire, in Tai Po, Hong Kong, China.



▲ A resident stands on a street while buildings burn after an evening Russian drone strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine.



▲ A surfer rides a wave during sunrise at Bondi Beach in Sydney, Australia

Raptors' RJ Barrett out at least a week

TORONTO Raptors swingman RJ Barrett will be sidelined for at least a week with a right knee sprain, the team announced Wednesday.

An MRI revealed no structural damage for Barrett, who sustained the injury on Sunday in the third quarter of Toronto's 119-109 win against the Brooklyn Nets.

Barrett, 25, is averaging 19.4 points, 4.8 rebounds and 3.8 assists in 17 games (all starts) for the Raptors, who take an eight-game winning streak into their Wednesday game against the visiting Indiana Pacers.

Barrett has averaged 18.9 points, 5.5 rebounds and 3.3 assists in 404 games (403 starts) with the Knicks (2019-23) and Raptors since New York drafted him No. 3 overall in



▲ Toronto Raptors forward RJ Barrett.

Irish lock Ryan gets three game ban for Springbok red card

IRELAND lock James Ryan has been banned for three matches after making a dangerous clearout at a ruck during last weekend's loss to South Africa in the Autumn Nations Series, organisers announced on Wednesday.

The 29-year-old was initially yellow-carded by referee Matthew Carley but it was upgraded to a 20 minute red card, after 20 minutes of Saturday's 24-13 defeat, for a head-high challenge on Springboks hooker Malcolm Marx.

The British and Irish Lions second row forward could miss just two matches if he takes part in World Rugby's Coaching Intervention Programme.

The 29-year-old was initially yellow-carded by referee Matthew Carley but it was upgraded to a 20 minute red card, after 20 minutes of Saturday's 24-13 defeat, for a head-high challenge on Springboks hooker Malcolm Marx. The British and Irish Lions second row forward could miss just two matches if he takes part in World Rugby's Coaching Intervention Programme.

Ryan will definitely sit out his province Leinster's match with Welsh region Dragons on Friday - though it is unlikely he would have played after he appeared in all four of Ireland's Autumn Nations Series tests - and the Champions Cup opener against Harlequins on December 6. (Reuters)



▲ Ireland lock James Ryan has been banned for three matches.



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Reijnders adamant Man City will keep calm after Leverkusen loss

TIJJANI Reijnders has insisted there will be no loss of nerve at Manchester City following their surprise defeat by Bayer Leverkusen in the Champions League.

City manager Pep Guardiola felt confident enough to make 10 changes to his team only for the side to lose 2-0 at home to Bundesliga outfit Leverkusen on Tuesday.

Defeat ended City's unbeaten start to the league phase of European club football's elite competition ahead of a tie with Spanish giants Real Madrid and came just days after their loss to Newcastle in the Premier League last weekend.

"Of course it's a bummer (but) we should not lose our confidence because we did great before and we have to get back on that winning streak, and that's by being ready for the next game on Saturday (at home to Leeds)," said Dutch midfielder Reijnders.

"Mentally we have to be ready. We know what we can do and what we showed before. It's on us to do that again - don't lose the confidence because we have a lot of quality in the team.

"We should not panic now. Of course losing two times in a row is not a good thing but we know there are still plenty of chances this season and we have to go game to game."

Reijnders's fellow midfielder Nico Gonzalez was the only player to retain his starting spot from the defeat at St James' Park, with Guardiola opting to rest several star names including Erling Haaland, Phil Foden and Gianluigi Donnarumma.

But goals from Alejandro Grimaldo and Patrik Schick put Leverkusen on top and not even the introduction of Norway striker Haaland, who has scored 32 goals for club and country this season, with 25 minutes remaining could turn the tide for City.

Reijnders, however, was adamant this defeat would have no bearing on City's match against record 15-time European champions Real Madrid at the Bernabeu on December 10.

"I don't think it will put extra pressure," he said. "We know what we can expect there from Madrid, but it's in a couple of weeks so first let's be ready for Saturday."

(Reuters)



▲ Tijjani Reijnders has insisted there will be no loss of nerve at Manchester City.

Ronaldo cleared to play opening matches at World Cup

PORTUGAL captain Cristiano Ronaldo will be able to play his side's opening matches at next year's World Cup after FIFA suspended the final two games of a three-match ban on Tuesday.

Ronaldo was sent off in Portugal's penultimate qualifying match against Ireland in Dublin earlier this month for an elbow into the back of Dara O'Shea during a 2-0 defeat.

The red card meant Ronaldo missed Portugal's final group game, a 9-1 win over Armenia which secured qualification, and FIFA confirmed that the 40-year-old had been given a three-match ban, but barring a repeat incident, he will not serve any further punishment.

"In line with article 27 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code, the serving of the two remaining matches has been suspended under a one-year probation period," a FIFA statement said.

"If Cristiano Ronaldo commits another infringement of a similar nature and gravity during the probationary period, the suspension set out in the disciplinary decision shall be deemed automatically revoked and the remaining two matches must be served immediately at the next official match(es) of the Portuguese representative team."

Article 27 allows FIFA's judicial body "to fully or partially suspend the implementation of a disciplinary measure".

Beyond citing article 27, FIFA did not say in its statement why the ban had been suspended. Reuters has contacted FIFA for an explanation.

The red card, which was upgraded from an initial yellow card after a VAR check, was Ronaldo's first in 226 international appearances for Portugal.

Ronaldo, who extended his contract with Saudi Arabian side Al-Nassr until 2027 in June, will be playing at his sixth World Cup finals and targeting the one major trophy missing from his list of honours.



▲ Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo.

The former Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus forward was part of Portugal's Euro 2016-winning team, and has also won two Nations League titles and is the record scorer in international football with

143 goals.

The draw for the 2026 World Cup, which takes place in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, will be held on December 5 in Washington.

(Reuters)

SA conquer 'final frontier' in India

BEATING India in their backyard is considered test cricket's biggest challenge, and Temba Bavuma's men aced it with a 2-0 series sweep, which will dispel any doubt about South Africa's credentials as world champions in the long format.

The outcry over the minefield of a pitch in Kolkata overshadowed their triumph inside three days in the series opener - South Africa's first test win in India since 2010.

Besides, India were one batter short in that low-scoring match after home captain Shubman Gill had to retire hurt with a neck injury, which threw him out of the rest of the series.

Nothing, however, could take the sheen off South Africa's memorable victory in the first-ever test in Guwahati where the Proteas handed out a 408-run shellacking - India's biggest test defeat in terms of runs.

South Africa's first test series victory in India in 25 years is even more remarkable as it was achieved without pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada, who missed both tests with a rib injury. India stood as what former Australia captain Steve Waugh famously called test cricket's 'final frontier' for not losing a home series for 12 years until New Zealand snapped that streak late last year.



▲ South Africa's Simon Harmer celebrates a wicket in Johannesburg, South Africa.

hitwishing them consolidates South Africa's second position in the World Test Championship standings, behind Australia whom they beat in the WTC final in June.

It also proves their famous victory at Lord's was no fluke.

"These are the type of things that we're working towards and dreaming of," Bavuma

said on Wednesday.

"I think what makes it sweeter for some of us within the group is the fact that we've been on the other side of the result. We've had dark days, and we know how tough it can be. I think for this group of gentlemen, again, another incredible achievement."

(Reuters)

MTN PREMIER LEAGUE BUILD-UP

Minnows target Wanderers, Leopard

By Chris Dlamini

... As faltering giants visit resilient Amawele, Ubombo Sugar

THE onus is on the giants Manzini Wanderers and Royal Leopard to rise and take home crucial points against their smaller rivals this weekend.

Both in the bottom three following a dishevelled start to the season that has lacked inspiration in seven games, Wanderers and Leopard desperately need the maximum points.

It's midway through the first round as of this weekend, so they need to turn things around. Wanderers will be away to rookies Amawele, while Ingwe Mabalabala as Leopard is fondly known, visits Ubombo Sugar on Saturday. Can the giants finally make amends to their wounds? They are in must-wins, or it will be nothing but early season relegation woes for them.

Gcina, trio can rescue 'Weslians'

Amawele vs. Manzini Wanderers

Date: Saturday, November 29

Venue: Prince of Wales Sports Ground, Mbabane

Kick-off: 3pm

Someone must get sick and tired of losing games at whim - and that speaks to faltering giants Manzini Wanderers. It is only last season that they did not kick the ball due to a long relegation court case they eventually won. And yes, they had finished in a relegation position.

They are back in action this term, but relegation is still the buzzword sticking with them like plague. Seven games have been played now, and one needs to turn the tables around before the name of this big brand appears, right on number 15, with only Sis- onkhe below them. They have five points of a possible 21, and that is 11 points behind leaders Manzini Sea Birds.

Amawele are just two places above them as the rookies search for their second elite win, which could lift their confidence as they had a resilient side but with no luck. They are not easy opponents amid their place in the standings.

That is why LiWeseli (Wanderers) will need their best players and the head coach Gcina Dlamini to be at their element best to deliver for the maroon and white outfit a much-needed win. Dlamini has to call upon his talented Mozambican goalkeeper Mario Jamine and forwards Sikhumbuzo Mazibuko and Manuel Silima to spearhead every move and ensure they do not lose the match.

The maroon and white side certainly miss their captain and midfielder, Mlamuli 'Mla-



▲ Ubombo Sugar FC striker Melusi Thwala fighting for the ball.

ba' Nkambule, who is nursing a muscle injury. Both teams lost their matches in the past week, meaning they all will go out for the kill. Amawele, interestingly, have Vusisizwe Mahlalela at the helm as their coach, a former Manzini Wanderers goalkeeper. He is one looking to keep Amawele in the elite league, and that means he will not compromise anything.

His team is impressive on the ball despite the unfortunate results. They have the potential to condemn Wanderers further into the relegation cesspit.

PLAYERS TO WATCH:**Amawele**

1. Njabulo Magongo
2. Thando 'Ballo' Dlamini (Midfielder)

M. Wanderers

1. Mario Jamine (M. Wanderers goalkeeper)
2. Sandile Mazibuko (M. Wanderers midfielder)

PREVIOUS MATCH

▲ Wanderers head coach Gcina Dlamini.



▲ Royal Leopards players before one of their recent matches.

RESULTS:M. Wanderers 1-4 T. Celtics
Amawele 1-2 Ubombo Sugar**HEAD-TO-HEAD:**

First meeting.

LOG STANDINGS:

Amawele - 13th (5 points)

M. Wanderers - 15th (5 points)

PERFORMANCE GUIDE:

Amawele

L D L D L

M. Wanderers

L D L W L

Can Leopard 'Ed-win' to woes?

Ubombo Sugar FC vs. Royal Leopard

Date: Saturday, November 29, 2025

Venue: Mayaluka Stadium, Big Bend

Kick-off: 3pm

He has just about everything he needs for a balanced and complete squad. He has vast talent, quality, and experience, but just not the results his team must be getting. He has watched the boys play to their best one would think they were comfortably leading, but scoring goals has been the toughest, when conceding has been the easiest thing.

That just sums it all for the Royal Leopard's head coach, Edwin Matsebula, and his troops. Matsebula has been forced to leave the stadium scratching his head, wondering what just hit them in the last four matches - three defeats and a goalless draw. Since their exit in the TotalEn-

ergies CAF Confederation Cup second preliminary stage, things have gone badly for the runners-up of last season and Ingwenyama Cup defending champions. Going to Mayaluka, they should brace themselves for a torrid afternoon as nothing will be on a silver platter.

With former Tabankulu Celtics coach Percy Shongwe now working for Bafana Bashukela (Ubombo Sugar), it certainly will be an interesting one. Celtics also shocked Leopard 3-0 among other teams that have outfoxed the misfiring star-studded police outfit. A tough outing lies ahead for Matsebula and his troops. Leopard won 2-1 the last time they met in the league, which is last season.

PLAYERS TO WATCH:**U. Sugar FC**

1. Melusi 'Vardy' Thwala (Striker)
2. Samkelo Ginindza (defender)

R. Leopard

1. Lungelo Tsabedze (Forward)
2. Thokozani 'Thikithi' Dlamini (Attacking midfielder)

PREVIOUS MATCH RESULTS:

U. Sugar FC 2-1 Amawele

R. Leopard 1-2 M. Sea Birds

LOG STANDINGS:

U. Sugar FC - 12th (7 points)

R. Leopard - 14th (5 points)

HEAD-TO-HEAD:

01/03/25

U. Sugar 1-2 R. Leopard

06/10/24

R. Leopard 4-0 U. Sugar

PERFORMANCE GUIDE:

U. Sugar FC

L L L L W

R. Leopard

W L D L L



▲ Amawele players celebrate a goal.



▲ Manzini Wanderers players first XI before a recent match.



▲Japan bound karatekas Nelisiwe Gama and Mpendulo Maxonga displaying the national flag.

Oyama duo promises glory in Japan

By Sibusiso Masilela
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READY for the big stage. The Oyama duo of Nelisiwe Gama and Mpendulo Maxonga have both promised glory in the Oyama Cup in Japan, scheduled for November 29-30, 2025.

Gama will be competing in the open weight category, while Maxonga will be in action under the lightweight division under 70.

The two athletes revealed the news during their farewell function to Asia held at the Eswatini Sport and Recreation Council offices on Tuesday.

"I am ready for the assignment and will do my level best to bring back home a medal. I would like to thank my coaches for

supporting me during the preparations," said top female karateka Gama.

Meanwhile, Maxonga said he is geared for the assignment.

"I am looking forward to the assignment and want to make the nation proud. I am grateful for the support of the coaches during training," he said.

The duo will be under the guidance of sensei Zweli Thwala, who will be attending grading at the Asian nation.

The Eswatini Sport and Recreation Council has implored the Oyama national team to make the country proud in the 2025 Oyama World Cup.

The national body Chief Executive Officer Darius Dlomo mandated the duo through his representative and Finance Manager Nqobile Dlamini ahead of the annual international cup.

The trip is funded by ESRC and BMG.

Luca Fraser off to SA



▲Luca Fraser.

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

THE country's top swimmer, Luca Fraser, is off to South Africa for the Kathy Long Doyle championships.

The pelicans Swimmer club youngster will be competing in the three days competition scheduled for Johannesburg between November 27-30, 2025.

He will be competing in several categories such as the breaststroke, backstroke and butterfly, among others.

The competition will help Fraser prepare

for an international assignment, such as the ANOCA youth games in December in Angola. Luca's coach Meluleki 'Sluga' Simelane confirmed the latest news when reached for comment.

"We wish the swimmer the best of luck during the trip and are confident that the competition will also improve his career. We thank the organisers for offering the athlete this opportunity," he said.

Fraser is also earmarked to represent the country in the 2028 Olympic Games as he is part of the E8 million scholarship program recently announced by the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (EOCGA).

Thrilling action in Instacash Lubombo Social Games

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE vibrant spirit of community and friendly competition was on full display this past weekend as the Instacash Lubombo Social Sports Day concluded with great success, crowning champions across multiple disciplines in Simunye.

The tournament, a lively celebration of local talent and sportsmanship, attracted enthusiastic participation from various teams throughout the Lubombo region.

The event's highlights included the crowning of several deserving champions, such as OSSU Simunye, who emerged victorious in the soccer senior's category.

The soccer youth category was won by UNESWA with victory over Siteki Referral.

It was day of diversified sports as the Net Queens won the netball category.

In the volleyball category, RES Masters were crowned champions, while Shali Masters secured the top spot in the youth division. The event was more than just a competition; it was a significant initiative for social good, organised by the Good Shepherd Hospital.

All proceeds from the tournament were directed towards charitable causes, underscoring the commitment to community development inherent in every match played.

Instacash Managing Director Mandla Nxumalo said the event was a success.

"We are super grateful for the teams that participated. This for us signifies growth and continued use of the Instacash platform, which is what we are driving really," he said.

Nxumalo elaborated on the company's vision for the future of the games.

"We look forward to expanding these



▲UNESWA players celebrating during the Instacash Lubombo social games.

games and visiting all four regions of Eswatini, translating to increased engagement with the Instacash platform. We celebrate every player who puts in their effort to make these games a success," Nxumalo said.

The success of the Lubombo Social Sports Day sets a positive precedent for Instacash's expansion plans, promising to bring energy and community engagement to all corners of the kingdom.

By Chris Dlamini

THE Ingwenyama Cup is a 32-team national tournament.

However, before the national stage, regional teams start by eliminating each other, then the best four join the elite and second-tier leagues' teams. After the increase of teams to 16 in both elite and second-tier National First Division (NFD) League, the Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) has 32 teams already, which will take the numbers to 36 when the best four regional teams join in. To resolve this, the PLE has to come up with an elimination round to bring the number down to 32.

"It's true that we will have 36 teams this year since under the PLE, we have 32 teams, and then four will come from the regions.

"It is also the truth that our agreement with our sponsor, SMVAF, is for 32 teams in the national phase. This then points to play-offs as one of the means to resolve this," said Vilakati.

He said the PLE Executive Committee would announce the way forward, but it was quite clear there would be play-offs. Vilakati explained he would not be in a position to detail how the play-offs would go about or which teams would play. However, indications are that the bottomloggers, particularly the bottom two-placed teams in the two top leagues, were at a big risk to undergo the

Ingwenyama Cup play-offs for big guns

play-offs alongside the bottom two regional teams while the regional champions and runners-up automatically qualify, making it 30 teams.

If this format is followed, it would see six teams, two from the top flight, two from the NFD League, and two from the regions, fight for the last two spots in probably round robin play-offs.

Currently at risk of the play-offs are giant teams Royal Leopard, Manzini Wanderers, and basement outfit Sisonkhe. Both Leopard and Wanderers have five points in the bottom three. Interestingly, Leopard are the defending champions, which could save them if considered, lest they stay above Wanderers when the format is decided.

In the NFD, teams like Viva Stumbo XI, Usuthu Liverpool, and Ludzeludze Killers, all bottom three, face the risk.

It should be mentioned that the PLE used play-offs when increasing teams to 16 to decide the one elite spot that was available. Giant-killing Tabankulu Celtics won the round robin play-offs.



▲ Innocent Pakule Momeni Pirates.

Malangeni, Hleliso close in on 'Sikhali's 14-goal haul

By Chris Dlamini

THEY are scoring goals for fun.

That is the duo of elite rookies Tabankulu Celtics forward Malangeni Dlamini and Rangers attacking midfielder Hleliso Gamedze.

Together, they have scored 15 goals, Gamedze with eight and Dlamini with seven in seven games.

The pair looks set to beat last season's sharpshooter, Sabelo 'Sikhali' Ndzinisa's 14 first round goals.

The Green Mamba forward went on to add three more in a tough second round, finishing as the Top Goalscorer Award winner with 18 goals.

He is yet to hit that scoring form this season.

However, while Ndzinisa is yet to be counted among the leading goalscorers this season, Gamedze has been the one emulating him, scoring in every match so far.

His goals have seen Bolova, as Rangers is fondly known, decently occupy the sixth spot with 12 points, four short of leaders Manzini Sea Birds.

Gamedze can increase his tally when they visit Mbabane Highlanders at Gosh Szokolay Stadium in Simunye on Sunday.

Closest to Gamedze is rookies star, Malangeni Dlamini who has seven goals after adding a brace last weekend in the 4-1 annihilation of faltering giants Manzini Wanderers.

He remains the only player with a hat-trick to date this season.

Dlamini takes on Sikhali's Green Mamba on Saturday at home inside the Tambankulu Stadium.

"It's my first time in the premier league and it feels great to be scoring goals. I always wish to score as many goals but I have missed and scored some," he said after the Wanderers game.

Meanwhile, against Green Mamba, he will also face off with gifted midfielder Banele 'Pupu' Sikhondze.

The latter has scored three in four games for Green Mamba who lost 2-1 to Young Buffaloes last weekend.

Other challenging goalscorers for the E14 000 Top Goalscorer Award are leaders Manzini Sea Birds stars Philani Mkhonto, Joseph Kibonge and Malanti Chiefs' Ghanaian forward Isaac Yeboah (4 goals apiece), and Ezulwini United's Kwenzokuhle 'Ndoye' Khumalo who also has three goals.

The leading scorers chart:

1. Hleliso Gamedze (Rangers) - 8 goals
2. Malangeni Dlamini (T. Celtics) - 7 goals
3. Philani Mkhonto (M. Sea Birds) - 4 goals
4. Isaac Yeboah (M. Chiefs) - 4 goals
5. Joseph Kibonge (M. Sea Birds) - 4 goals
6. Banele 'Pupu' Sikhondze (G. Mamba) - 3 goals
7. Kwenzokuhle 'Ndoye' Khumalo (Ez. United) - 3 goals



▲ The current EFA executive committee.

Nkosingiphile Shongwe new TDC Chairman

By Sibusiso Masilela
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ESWATINI Football Association vice president Nkosingiphile Shongwe is the new chairman of the Technical Development committee.

The former Hhohho Regional Football Association (HRFA) has replaced former Lubombo Regional Football Association Chairman Nichodemus 'Ace' Mashwama.

This follows the appointment of the EFA subcommittees for the next four years during an executive committee meeting held at Sigwaca House on Tuesday.

The Technical Committee's responsibility is to appoint national team coaches.

The first assignment of the TDC will be the appointment of the Sihlangu head coach.

The nation's pride is currently coach less since the conclusion of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, where the squad concluded the competition under the guidance of interim coach Sifiso 'Nuro' Ntibane.

Ntibane replaced Croatian mentor Zradvko Logarusic.

The meeting further senior vice president Steve Horton retains the head of Finance position, while HRFA Chairman Dr Comfort

Shongwe retained the Competitions committee position.

Newly appointed executive member Aaron 'Katalala' Mavimbela has replaced Sicelo Nene as the head of the youth committee.

The former Lubombo Regional Football Association Secretary, Nene is the new Referees Committee Chairman.

Premier League of Eswatini Chairman and third EFA vice president Polycarp Dlamini is heading the marketing committee.

EFA Marketing and Communications Manager Muzi Radebe said he was yet to learn to news when contacted.

"I haven't heard anything official from the executive committee meeting held on Tuesday," he said.

The full list of the new EFA subcommittees

Technical and Development committees - Nkosingiphile Shongwe.

Finance Committee - Steve Horton.

Youth Development - Aaron 'Katalala' Mavimbela.

Marketing committee - Polycarp Dlamini.

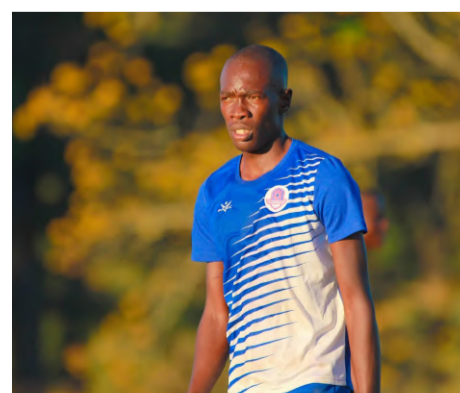
Women committee - Phumzile Dlamini.

Referees committee - Sicelo Nene.

Competitions committee - Comfort Shongwe.

Safety committee - Vusi Hall.

Medical committee - Nkosinathi Kunene.



▲ Hleliso Gamedze Rangers.



▲ Tambankulu Celtics players Malangeni Dlamini celebrating with his teammate.



Ronaldo cleared to play opening matches at WC
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Malangeni, Hleliso close in on 'Sikhali's 14-goal haul
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Eswatini *Thursday 27*
Daily News *November 2025*
Sport

**Ingwenyama Cup
play-offs for big guns**

... PLE will have 32 teams for the lucrative knockout national phase as four regional teams take number to 36. *Page 23*