Eswatini Daily News

Wednesday 10 December, 2025

SBS spent over E20 mln for conversion

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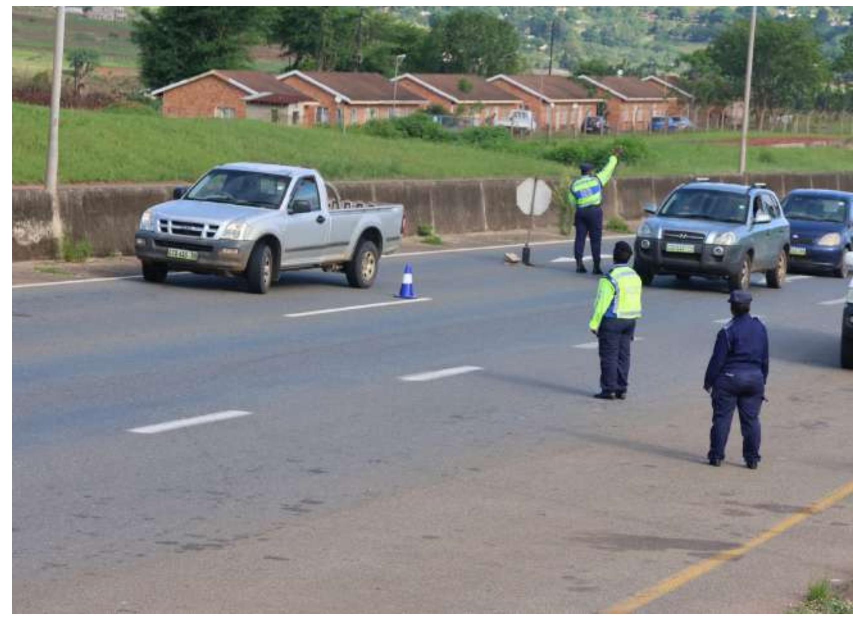
REPS steps up safety measures

▲ Eswatini gears up for festive, increases safety measure. REPS at the forefront of initiative.



▲ Eswatini is the safest place for tourist, REPS have begun its operations which ensures that emaSwati and visitors are safe during the Festive season.

Mankayane Govt Hospital reopens after fire disruption

By Ncaba Ntshakala

THE Ministry of Health has announced that Mankayane Government Hospital will resume full operations on Wednesday, 10 December 2025, following the successful restoration of electricity and safety clearance after a fire incident that affected part of the facility on Sunday night.

The fire, which damaged the Male Surgical Ward and part of the Female Ward, forced an immediate shutdown of the hospital. All admitted patients were safely evacuated and temporarily transferred to nearby health facilities.

■ SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

NDMA clarifies storm damage assessments

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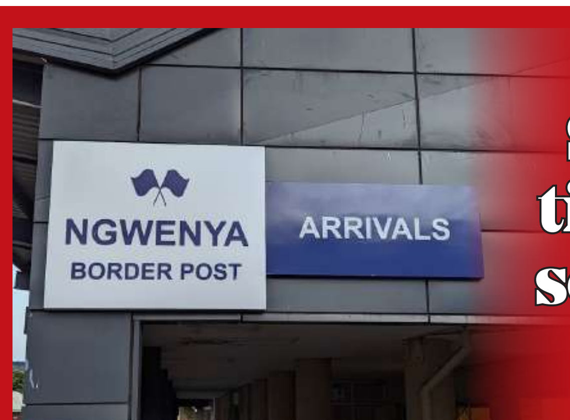

Eswatini, South Africa tighten festive season border measures

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A Rubicon Media Group publication

Mankayane Government Hospital reopens after fire disruption

By Ncaba Ntshakala
ncaban@rubiconmedia.group

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The fire, which damaged the Male Surgical Ward and part of the Female Ward, forced an immediate shutdown of the hospital. All admitted patients were safely evacuated and temporarily transferred to nearby health facilities.

The swift response by health workers, the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) team, and community members helped prevent injuries and ensured the safe relocation of patients.

An initial assessment by the Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC) on Monday advised that the hospital should not use electricity until precautionary measures were taken to prevent further damage. A contractor was quickly engaged to carry out the required work.

A follow-up assessment by EEC on Tuesday morning confirmed that the hospital was safe for power reconnection. Electricity supply was restored the same day, allowing the Ministry to declare the facility fit to resume operations.

Patients who had been transferred to other facilities will now be brought back to Mankayane Government Hospital. Two previously used isolation wards will be repurposed to accommodate services for the affected areas. These wards have been inspected by EEC officials and the Eswatini Fire and Emergency Services, who certified them safe for use.

In a statement, the Ministry expressed appreciation to all stakeholders who assisted during the emergency, including partnering health facilities, the EPR team, health workers, and members of the public who risked their safety to help evacuate patients during the fire.

The Ministry further assured hospital staff and the public that the facility is safe, stable, and fully ready to resume operations.

▲ *The NDMA says the country has come through an exceptionally difficult week as families count the cost of severe storms that left homes damaged and livelihoods disrupted.*

NDMA clarifies storm damage assessments as households begin recovery efforts

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) says the country has come through an exceptionally difficult week as families count the cost of severe storms that left homes damaged and livelihoods disrupted.

While many should be preparing for a joyful Christmas, the agency noted that a number of households are instead dealing with the distress of rebuilding their lives.

In a statement issued recently, NDMA extended its thoughts to all affected families and clarified the purpose of the ongoing assessments in storm-hit communities. According to the agency, these assessments are carried out to help government understand the scale of the damage, determine levels of need across various communities, and identify the most vulnerable households requiring urgent intervention.

NDMA emphasised that being assessed does not automatically guarantee assistance for every homestead. Instead, the findings guide a fair and evidence-based prioritisation process, particularly at a time when resources are stretched.

The agency encouraged families who are able to begin their own recovery efforts to do so, explaining that this helps ensure that limited support reaches those who cannot recover on their own. "Every step taken by households with the means to rebuild allows assistance to be directed to those who truly have nothing left," the statement noted.

NDMA said it is this spirit of shared responsibility and community support that will ensure the most vulnerable are not left behind as the country works toward recovery and preparedness under the banner of Nkwe to Disaster Preparedness.

Eswatini, SA tighten festive season border measures

By Delisa Magagula

CROSS-BORDER travellers moving between Eswatini and South Africa during the 2025 festive season should expect extended operating hours at selected Eswatini border posts as well as stricter health and security checks upon entering the Republic of South Africa.

Authorities in both countries have announced measures aimed at easing congestion while safeguarding public health and preventing the illegal movement of restricted goods.

The Ministry of Home Affairs in Eswatini has confirmed that Mahamba, Matsamo and Mananga border posts will operate under extended hours from 22- 24 December.

The adjustments are intended to accommodate the annual spike in traffic as citizens travel for holidays, family visits and year-end activities.

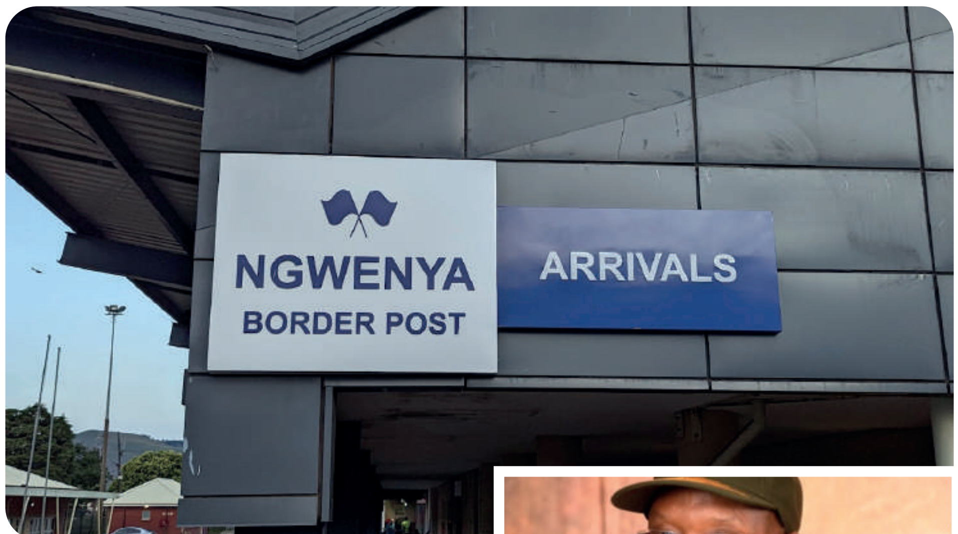
According to the Ministry, Mahamba currently operates from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm but will extend to midnight on 23 and 24 December. Matsamo, which normally closes at eight in the evening, will operate until ten at night from 22 to 24 December. Mananga, usually closing at six in the evening, will operate until eight at night over the same period. All other border posts not appearing on the extension list will continue operating under their usual schedules.

The Ministry of Home Affairs stated that the extension aims to reduce congestion and improve the flow of travellers, noting that the festive season traditionally results in heavier traffic.

The Ministry also reminded travellers to ensure they carry the correct documents and comply with all requirements at ports of entry to avoid unnecessary delays.

At the same time, South Africa's Border Management Authority (BMA) has issued a public alert announcing intensified screening measures for all travellers entering the Republic during the holiday period.

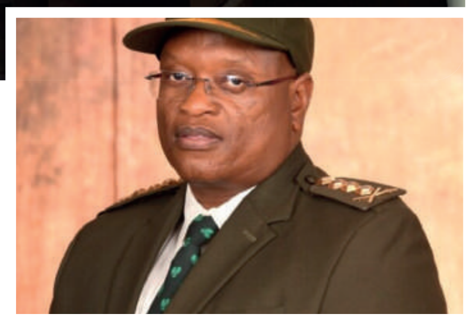
BMA Commissioner Dr Michael Masiapato said the increase in regional mobility at this time of year requires strengthened measures to prevent the importation of communicable diseases.



Dr Masiapato said all inbound travellers will be screened for signs of illness on arrival. He encouraged any traveller experiencing symptoms to report immediately to BMA port health officials for assessment. The Commissioner also emphasised compliance with yellow fever regulations.

Travellers arriving from countries where the disease is endemic will be expected to present a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate. According to the BMA, individuals who fail to produce one may be denied entry into South Africa.

Tighter controls will also apply to travellers carrying agricultural produce. Dr Masiapato explained that while South Africa allows certain agricultural products from its six immediate neighbours Eswatini, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique these items must meet strict phytosanitary, health and quality standards as set by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.



▲ *Dr NM Masiapato, Commissioner and CEO of Border Management Authority.*

Meat, fruits and vegetables that do not comply with these standards, or that are being imported without the required permits, will be confiscated and destroyed.

To enforce these regulations, BMA teams will conduct searches using sniffer dogs and virtual inspection tools. The Commissioner said these measures are essential for protecting South Africa's biosecurity and preventing the spread of pests, diseases and unsafe food products.

Meanwhile, Eswatini's Ministry of Health has also issued guidance for travellers passing through its own borders, confirming that port health desks will be fully active throughout the festive period.

▲ *Minister for Home Affairs, Her Royal Highness Princess Lindiwe.*

Ministry of Health Communications Officer Nsindiso Tsabedze said the country has long maintained screening procedures at ports of entry, but checks will be stricter this season, particularly for signs of respiratory illnesses, including Covid-19, following the identification of recent cases in the kingdom.

The intensified health protocols in both countries reflect a coordinated effort to ensure safe movement during one of the busiest travel periods of the year.

Authorities have advised travellers to allow extra time for inspections, prepare necessary documents in advance, and cooperate fully with officials to ensure efficient processing at the borders.

Worth noting, the measures announced by Eswatini and the BMA underline a shared concern for public health and orderly travel, while recognising the significant rise in cross-border movement expected over the Christmas period.

SBS spent over E20 Mln for conversion to commercial bank

By Lwazi Dlamini
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CONVERTING to a commercial bank known as SBS Bank Eswatini (SBE) has not come cheap for the Swaziland Building Society.

SBS Managing Director Mbali Sibanyoni told members of the media on Tuesday morning at Mountain View International Hotel that the whole journey has cost the Society in excess of E20 million.

"In terms of the budget, it is within budget as we started the journey in 2012. It's been a long journey wit the consultant and putting systems in place. I can assure you that everything has been budgeted. There are still some systems that we have to put in as well, Sibanyoni said.

Sibanyoni announced that January 2, 2026, is the official date for the long-awaited conversion into a medium-size commercial bank.

SBS Bank Eswatini Manager Legal and Board Secretary Velaphi Dlamini said SBS Bank Eswatini had been granted a provisional medium-size commercial banking license by the Central Bank of Eswatini (CBE) and the tripartite' s (FSRA, CBE and Ministry of Finance) approval was secured for conversion under Section 67 bis of the Building Societies Act.

▲ *SBS Manager Legal and Board Secretary Velaphi Dlamini assured the customers that the transition into a medium-size commercial bank is on track.*

"Currently, SBS Bank Eswatini is undergoing its registration process as a Public Company, a process targeted to be completed this month (December 2025), marking the official conversion of the Swaziland Building Society to a Company. Upon registration as a company, FRSA would be expected to strike-out the SBS from the register of Societies. This process is targeted to be completed early next year," Dlamini said.

▲ *Building Society Managing Director Mbali Sibanyoni taking the media through the journey of turning into a commercial bank on Tuesday at Mountain View International Hotel.*

Dlamini explained that beyond the institutional change, shareholders are also being smoothly guided through the transition.

"From 2 January 2026, permanent shares will be converted into ordinary shares based on the election form submitted during the Special General Meeting held on November 15, 2024. Members who did not submit election forms will temporarily receive redeemable shares, valid for 90 days from 5 January to 4 April 2026, allowing sufficient times for informed decision-making," he said.

Dlamini added: "Those who do not select by 4 April 2026, will have their redeemable shares automatically converted into a term deposit, ensuring that members' funds remain protected and productive. SBS has further simplified the process by making all relevant forms available at its head office, branches and official website, supported by dedicated conversion desks to assist members,"

The conversion of SBS into a commercial bank represents more than a change of name – it reflects decades of growth, resilience and strategic vision.

Experts warn of surge in AI-driven scams

. . . as Eswatini strengthens digital defences

Stories by Ncaba Ntshakala
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THE second day of the Countering Disinformation and Promoting Digital Transparency workshop brought sharp focus to the escalating threat of digital scams and misinformation, with experts urging government, media and the private sector to strengthen vigilance as cybercriminals embrace artificial intelligence to execute sophisticated attacks.

Facilitating two sessions, cybersecurity specialist Atlas Yu outlined how traditional fraud methods have evolved into high-speed, high-volume digital operations that now exploit AI tools to deceive individuals, corporations and governments.

Yu began by explaining the "five layers of the gangster"—a model used to understand how scammers target victims. Traditionally, he said, fraudsters relied on slowly building trust, impersonating suppliers or companies, and carefully crafting long-term deception strategies. He cited major global examples where companies, including Toyota, lost millions due to business email compromise schemes executed through fake invoices.

"Before AI, a scammer might send 20 emails a day. With AI-powered mailing tools, they can send thousands in one day," Yu said.

He warned that AI is now enabling criminals to create personalised scripts for different targets within minutes, allowing them to tailor fraudulent messages for companies across sectors; automotive, shipping, manufacturing or finance—without the labour-intensive preparation previously required.

▲ Some of the participants during the workshop.

Yu also highlighted the rising influence of false audio and video content on political processes, referencing a Ghana election study showing that manipulated media played a major role in shaping public opinion and fuelling unrest through fabricated crime alerts and security rumours.

"This kind of disinformation creates distrust, weakens institutions and spreads fear," he said.

Yu added that health misinformation remains a serious concern, especially when false claims about vaccines circulate widely, undermining public trust in government health interventions.

Another growing danger, he explained, is the use of celebrity face-swapping in online investment scams. Fraudsters now use deepfakes of well-known figures such as global CEOs or political leaders to lure unsuspecting victims into high-profit schemes.

"Whenever you see a famous face promising guaranteed returns, that should ring alarm bells," he cautioned.

He also noted increasing global manipulation of Facebook, WhatsApp and other widely used platforms, warning participants to remain vigilant. "If there is really easy money to be made, why would a stranger be sharing it with you instead of their own family?" he asked.

▲ The lead member of the Taiwan Digital Diplomacy Association Cheng Peng.

Taiwan expert warns: Rising cyber threats now target national stability

DELEGATES attending Day 2 of the Countering Disinformation and Promoting Digital Transparency workshop received a sobering assessment of global cybersecurity risks, as Taiwanese expert Atlas Yu detailed how coordinated digital attacks are increasingly targeting national infrastructure, supply chains and public institutions.

Yu told participants that Taiwan faces more than two million cyberattacks daily, ranging from attempts to breach government systems to efforts to infiltrate critical infrastructure such as power plants, water systems and telecommunications networks. He said this constant pressure has transformed Taiwan into one of the world's most experienced hubs in cybersecurity resilience.

"Taiwan has been battle-tested. We have been attacked, probed and stressed for years, and that experience has pushed our cybersecurity sector to evolve rapidly," Yu said.

He outlined how Taiwanese companies have since built strong, specialised capabilities from AI-driven threat detection to industrial-level systems that protect manufacturing plants, power grids and national operations. Firms like CyCrab, T5 Intelligence, T1 Networks and DefCore were highlighted as leaders providing tools and real-world solutions.

Yu then shifted to the emerging threat landscape shaped by AI, explaining how artificial intelligence does not only power defences but also enables attackers to launch more complex campaigns. AI can scan websites for vulnerabilities, clone voices, generate realistic malware, disguise harmful files as legitimate documents and flood social media with coordinated misinformation.

Yu cautioned that organisations must now prepare for simultaneous waves of attacks, ranging from operational disruptions to reputational sabotage.

He also issued a strong warning about supply chain vulnerabilities, particularly in hardware and communication systems sourced from countries with known risks. He referenced global research showing that more than 60 percent of Internet-of-Things chips are manufactured in environments where remote firmware updates could be manipulated for cyber infiltration.

"This is not only about computers. It includes vehicle chargers, routers, and power grid components, just anything connected to the system," he said.

Yu emphasised that attackers often remain hidden for years before executing a major disruption especially during politically sensitive periods such as elections. He cited the 2021 ransomware attack that shut down a major US oil pipeline, and findings that some electric vehicle chargers contained default passwords and insecure update settings.

The session concluded with a call for stronger national policies on procurement, data standardisation and cybersecurity investment. Yu urged government ministries, media houses and the private sector to recognise that cyber threats today target not only information but also national stability, public trust and economic systems.

"Cybersecurity is no longer an IT issue, it is a national resilience issue," he said.

▲ Taiwan expert Atlas Yu speaking during the workshop.

Govt raises alarm on expired foods

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Health has intensified its call for heightened caution among members of the public as the festive season approaches, warning that this period often sees an increase in unsafe, expired, and counterfeit food products entering the market.

According to Zinhle Mamba, Senior Health Inspector at the Municipal Council of Mbabane, food safety compliance remains a significant concern, particularly within restaurants.

She said many establishments continue to fall short of basic hygiene and food handling standards, putting consumers at risk of foodborne illnesses.

Mamba explained that one of the most common problems inspectors encounter is poor food rotation.

She said restaurants frequently fail to follow the 'first-in, first-out' principle, resulting in food expiring while still on shelves or being served to customers.

She added that staff changes often worsen the situation, especially when outgoing employees do not communicate expiry dates, storage information, or stock status to incoming teams.

"Restaurants are the most non-compliant. They must rotate food properly and ensure there is clear communication when staff change shifts or leave work so important dates are not lost,"

Mamba said. She noted that failure to document or relay this information creates gaps that compromise food quality and public health.

The Senior Environmental Officer from the Ministry of Health Norman Maseko echoed the same concerns, stressing that the festive period presents even greater risks. With increased shopping, higher food demand, and informal vendors flooding marketplaces, expired and counterfeit products become more common.

Maseko warned that some suppliers deliberately repackage expired goods or sell damaged items at reduced prices, taking advantage of consumers who are rushed or inattentive.

The Ministry urged the public to carefully inspect food labels before purchasing, paying attention to expiry dates, unusual packaging, discolouration, and off-odours. Consumers were also advised to buy from reputable suppliers and avoid items sold at suspiciously low prices.

Health inspectors emphasised that food hygiene extends beyond expiry checks. Maseko reminded consumers to ensure that raw and cooked foods are stored separately, perishable items are refrigerated at safe temperatures, and kitchen surfaces are kept clean at all times.

He further warned that cross-contamination remains one of the leading causes of foodborne illness in Eswatini, particularly during family gatherings and large events common in December.

The Ministry encouraged the public to look out for food-grade certificates displayed in restaurants and food outlets. Premises in Eswatini are graded A, B, C, or D based on compliance with hygiene and safety regulations, and the grade must be visible to customers.

Additionally, Maseko advised families to exercise caution when purchasing large quantities of meat, poultry, and seafood, as improper storage can lead to rapid spoilage. They urged households to ensure fridges and freezers are functioning efficiently and to cook food thoroughly before serving.

The Ministry said inspectors will continue conducting unannounced visits to food premises throughout the festive period, focusing on high-traffic areas and establishments with a history of non-compliance.

Penalties will be issued to operators who neglect food safety regulations. Members of the public are encouraged to report suspicious products, unhygienic food outlets, or expired goods to their nearest health office.

▲ *Mbabane Health inspectors went to shops in town.*

▲ *A van full of expired foods from stores in Mbabane.*

REPS issue strong warning against child abuse

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service has issued a strong call to action urging parents teachers and communities to take collective responsibility in protecting children from abuse and all forms of gender based violence.

In a statement released this week the police stressed that every child deserves a life filled with joy love safety and endless possibilities. However the Service noted with concern that many children in the country continue to suffer harm at the hands of people who are entrusted with their care and protection.

The statement highlights that abuse against children leaves deep and lasting scars that affect victims emotionally psychologically and socially well into adulthood. The Royal Eswatini Police Service warned that the consequences of abuse extend beyond the individual child and ultimately damage families communities and the nation as a whole.

Police emphasised that children rely on adults for guidance protection and support

and when that trust is broken the impact can be devastating. The Service urged parents and guardians to create safe home environments where children feel protected respected and able to speak openly without fear of punishment or shame.

Teachers were also reminded of their critical role as frontline protectors of children. The Police called on educators to remain vigilant for signs of abuse neglect or exploitation and to report any suspicious behaviour immediately. Schools the statement said must be places of safety where children are nurtured and empowered rather than exposed to harm.

Communities were encouraged to reject the culture of silence that often allows abuse to continue unchecked. The Royal Eswatini Police Service noted that in many cases abuse is known or suspected by community members who choose not to act. The statement appealed for courage and collective responsibility stating that protecting a child must always come before protecting reputations or family secrets.

The Police further reaffirmed their commitment to investigating cases of child abuse and gender based violence thoroughly and without fear or favour. They warned perpetrators that the law will take its course and that abusing a child is a serious crime with severe legal consequences.

The statement also encouraged members of the public to make use of available reporting platforms including visiting police stations or contacting relevant helplines. Early reporting the Police noted can prevent further harm and may save a child from years of suffering.

▲ *Embiveni Team Stopped to take a snap at the Hilltop Round about, in Mbabane.*

Embiveni launches "become embiveni's braai master" competition

By EDN Reporter

Eswatini Meat Industries (EMI), largely known as "Embiveni" has officially kicked off the festive season with the launch of its exciting new competition, "Become Embiveni's Braai Master", an initiative designed to bring communities together, reward loyal customers, and celebrate the spirit of togetherness that defines this special time of year.

The competition is simple and accessible to all Emaswati aged 18 and above. To enter, customers only need to spend E100 or more at any Embiveni Meat Market shop, write their name and phone number on the back of their till slip, and drop it into the blue entry box inside the store.

At the end of the campaign, Embiveni will select the lucky winners who will walk away with Braai Master Packs, just in time to elevate their holiday braai moments.

Driven by Vision, Powered by Passion

This competition is more than just fun and festive marketing, it is a direct reflection of Embiveni's commitment to supporting His Majesty King Mswati III's vision of transforming Eswatini into a First World nation. They are driven by Inyatsi Groups's Vision; Africa's Leading Intergrated business partner; grounded in excellence, service, and building meaningful connections with the people they serve.

Storming the Streets: Kwaluseni, Msunduza and Mahwalala Get the First Taste

To officially launch the campaign, the Embiveni team hit the streets in full energy, storming Kwaluseni, Msunduza, and Mahwalala with music, fliers, festive cheer, and a blue wave of Embiveni-branded excitement. Staff members interacted with residents, explained how to enter the competition, and encouraged the public to take part.

The atmosphere was electric as community members gathered around the team, eager to learn how they could become one of Embiveni's first-ever Braai Masters. Photos from the activations capture smiling faces, enthusiastic customers, and the unmistakable joy of the season.

The energetic storming activities and the launch of this competition show that the Embiveni brand is not only driven by capability, but also engaging communities, promoting customer participation, and creating innovative platforms that uplift consumer experience, Embiveni plays an active role in building a modern, customer-focused retail environment that inspires pride among Emaswati.

Where You Can Enter

All Emaswati are encouraged to enter the competition by visiting any of the following Embiveni Meat Market branches:

- Embiveni Meat Plaza, Matsapha
- Embiveni Meat Market, President Centre
- Embiveni Meat Plaza, Mbabane
- Embiveni Meat Market, Downtown
- Embiveni Meat Plaza, Nhlangano
- Embiveni Mini Meat Market, Siphofaneni
- Embiveni Mini Meat Market, Piggs Peak

▲ *Embiveni Management on the ground, driven by passion.*

Simply spend E100 or more, write your name and number on the back of your till slip, and drop it into the blue box.

A Festive Season of Winning

This December, Embiveni invites the nation to come together, celebrate community, and enjoy unforgettable braai moments made even better with the chance to win big.

With passion at the centre and customers at heart, Embiveni is making this festive season one to remember.

Embiveni Meat Market – Quality in Every Cut.

Eswatini Daily News

BUSINESS NEWS

Global trade set to grow 7%

ESSILORLUXOTTICA is betting big on smart eyewear and the gamble is about to be tested.

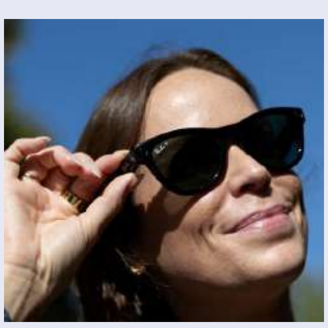
Its Ray-Ban Meta glasses, powered by artificial intelligence, have delivered their first meaningful revenue boost this year, but analysts warn that privacy concerns and a wave of new rivals could limit their growth.

The frames, launched in 2021, promise to upend the smartphone era by letting wearers take photos and videos through tiny cameras in the lenses, stream content to Meta apps and talk to an AI assistant.

Yet the same features that promise to make the AI-powered frames - born from the collaboration between Mark Zuckerberg's Meta and French-Italian eyewear giant EssilorLuxottica - into a must-have device are sparking concerns, as bystanders have little control over being recorded or how their data is handled.

"AI smart glasses raise significant privacy concerns," said Kleanthi Sardeli, a lawyer at European digital rights advocacy group NOYB. "The main issues are linked to the use of people's personal data to train AI models and transparency for bystanders."

(**Reuters**)



Ray-Ban Meta glasses, powered by artificial intelligence, have delivered their first meaningful revenue boost this year.

Pension funds surge to E55.8 billion

Stories By Delisa Magagula

PENSION and retirement fund assets grew to E55.8 billion in June 2025, rising from E50.1 billion recorded in June 2024, according to the Central Bank of Eswatini's Financial Stability Review presented by Governor Dr Phil Mnisi at the CBE Complex.

Dr Mnisi described the sector as stable, noting that its asset expansion continues to reinforce the country's financial system.

"The pension sector remains a key pillar of long-term financial stability, and the sustained growth in assets reflects sound management practices within the industry," he said during the presentation.

The Review further stated that the sector recorded year-on-year growth of 11.4 per cent, highlighting its ability to absorb shocks and contribute to market resilience.

According to the report, the expansion of assets strengthened the sector's ability to absorb unexpected shocks, providing a larger pool of stable, long-term capital.

The Central Bank indicated that this level of growth enhances the market's long-term resilience and contributes to investor confidence, given the pension industry's role as a major capital provider in the wider financial landscape.

"Foreign assets remained a significant component of pension fund portfolios. By June 2025, offshore investments accounted for 52.3 per cent of total pension assets, equivalent to E29.2 billion. This represented year-on-year growth of 10.1 per cent. The majority of foreign exposure was directed towards equities, which constituted 94.7 per cent of the offshore portfolio," reads the report by the Governor.

The Governor Dr Phil Mnisi making his review presentation.

Meanwhile, smaller allocations were reported in debt securities at 1.3 per cent, collective investment schemes at 2.9 per cent, property at 0.9 per cent, and other assets at 0.1 per cent.

While the rising foreign exposure contributed to broader geographical and currency diversification, the strong leaning toward equities introduced higher market and exchange rate risks to the portfolio. As a result, the Central Bank emphasised the importance of continuous risk monitoring within the sector. The institution highlighted the need for appropriate hedging strategies to manage potential external volatility, particularly in periods of global market uncertainty. Despite these risks, the pension sector maintained a stable outlook supported by consistent contributions, favourable market movements, and the continued strengthening of regulatory oversight.

Payments switch records 2 500 transactions per day

THE Central Bank of Eswatini has announced a significant increase in activity on the Eswatini Payments Switch following the launch of the Fast Payments Module.

All eight participating institutions are now fully integrated into the system, marking a major step forward in the modernisation of the national payments infrastructure.

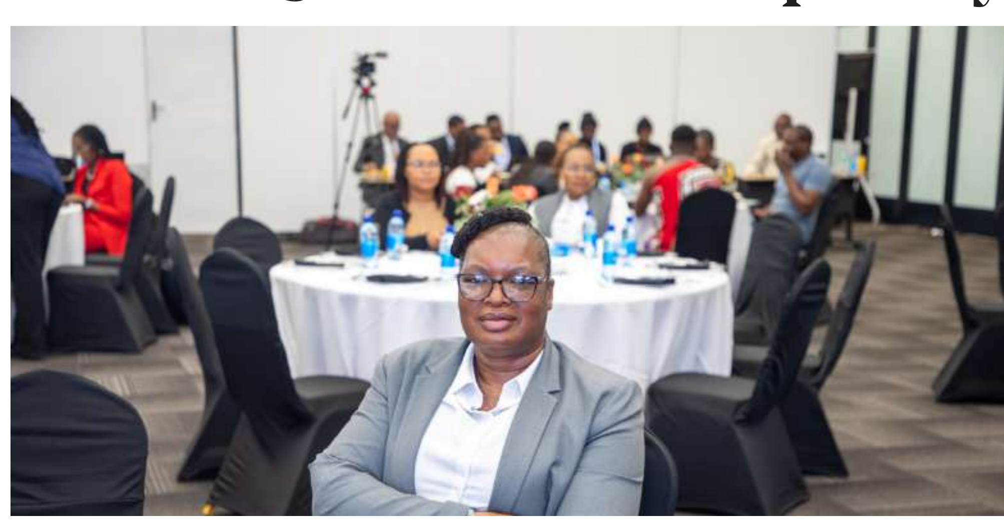
According to the Bank, the module is currently processing an average of 2 500 transactions per day. This level of usage reflects strong adoption across the financial sector and indicates growing consumer confidence in real-time payments.

Worth noting, the Fast Payments Module forms part of the broader Eswatini Payments Switch initiative, which aims to improve efficiency, interoperability, and security in the domestic payments ecosystem.

The integration of all participating financial institutions enables seamless transfers across banks and mobile operators, reducing settlement delays and improving convenience for users. Dr Mnisi stated that the system is expected to further enhance financial inclusion by supporting faster, low-cost digital payments.

"The platform also strengthens the resilience of the payments industry by reducing reliance on multiple fragmented systems and centralising transaction processing under a unified national switch," said Mnisi.

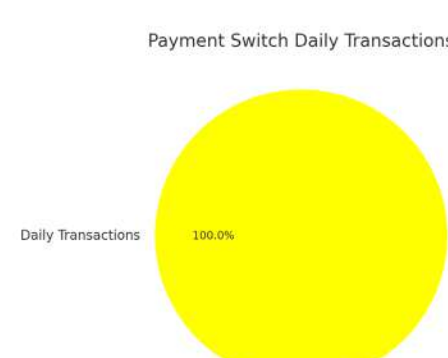
He further said the successful implementation of the module follows several years of investment in payments modernisation, regulatory strengthening, and infrastructure upgrades.



The Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Eswatini Felicia Dlamini-Kunene was also present during the launch.

The Bank noted that ongoing enhancements will continue to support innovation in the sector, particularly in areas such as instant payments, merchant solutions, and digital financial services.

"With daily transaction volumes rising steadily, the Payments Switch is positioned to play a central role in the country's financial integration and digital transformation agenda," said Mnisi.



Investment sector expands by E41.0 billion

Stories By Delisa Magagula

THE investment advisory and fund management industry recorded strong growth in the year to June 2025, driven by favourable market conditions and improved macroeconomic performance.

Total funds under management rose to E41.0 billion, up from E34.8 billion in June 2024, reflecting year-on-year growth of 17.7 per cent.

According to the financial stability review, presented by the Governor of the Central Bank of Eswatini (CBE), Dr Phil Mnisi on Monday.

The review is a cornerstone tool for safeguarding the soundness and resilience of Eswatini's financial system, providing an objective, forward-looking assessment of risks, institutional strength, and vulnerabilities.

Mnisi mentioned the expansion was largely supported by positive returns from global and regional markets.

He said elevated gold prices, influenced by geopolitical tensions and persistent inflation, contributed to gains in commodities and equity portfolios.

"Renewed accumulation of safe-haven assets by central banks further improved returns in key international markets," he said.

Meanwhile the Johannesburg Stock Exchange also played a significant role in strengthening performance, with improved equity valuations enhancing the value of domestic and offshore portfolios.

Collective investment schemes accounted for E9.4 billion of total assets, representing 22.9 per cent of funds under management.

The sector's growth was supported by broader improvements in the domestic economy, including stronger output across agriculture, mining, and manufacturing.

These sectors showed recovery from earlier disruptions and contributed to improved business conditions in late 2024 and early 2025.

Government reforms aimed at attracting foreign investment and expanding private-sector participation also reinforced confidence in the investment landscape. Efforts to streamline business registration processes and enhance the regulatory environment contributed to a more supportive climate for capital formation.

The Central Bank highlighted that digital innovation across the financial sector is playing a significant role in strengthening market infrastructure.

▲ A section of the tttendees following proceedings

▲ Central Bank ExCO was also in attendance.

▲ More participants listening to presentations.

▲ More attendees.

Market conditions strengthen as sector benefits from reforms

MARKET conditions improved steadily during the period under review, reflecting stronger economic performance and ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing the financial sector.

The Central Bank reported that improved activity in agriculture, mining, and manufacturing contributed significantly to the overall outlook, with each sector recording better output levels compared to the previous year.

The review noted that macroeconomic recovery from late 2024 created an enabling environment for investment growth.

Strengthening commodity prices and increased regional demand also supported market activity, particularly within export-oriented industries.

Reforms undertaken by government continued to influence the financial landscape positively. These initiatives focused on improving the ease of doing business, reducing administrative delays, and encouraging private-sector development.

The licensing of Letshego Eswatini Bank and SBS Bank Eswatini was highlighted as evidence of increased interest in the domestic financial sector. Their entry is expected to broaden competition and enhance access to credit.

According to the report, digital transformation remained a key feature of the evolving market environment. The introduction of advanced financial technologies, upgraded infrastructure, and improved processing systems contributed to a more resilient and efficient capital market.

The Central Bank emphasised that these developments support transparency, reduce settlement risks, and align the financial sector with global standards.

The report also highlighted the importance of strengthening market regulation as financial activity expands.

Enhanced supervisory practices, data systems, and governance frameworks were identified as essential to maintaining confidence and safeguarding stability.

With investment flows rising and institutional participation increasing, the financial markets are expected to continue benefiting from a more favourable operating environment driven by these reforms and technological advancements.

> *"Reforms undertaken by government continued to influence the financial landscape positively. These initiatives focused on improving the ease of doing business, reducing administrative delays, and encouraging private-sector development."*

Curator Bimal de Silva's contract ends, FSRA insists

Status Capital Building Society remains under curatorship

By Lwazi Dlamini

NOTWITHSTANDING the expiry of curator Bimal de Silva's contract, the embattled Status Building Society remains under curatorship.

De Silva's contract initially set for six months was extended for an additional period to ensure continuity and to allow the completion of critical stabilisation work.

According to a public notice issued by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA) providing an update to all Investors, Depositors, and Creditors of Status Capital Building Society (SCBS), Bimal's contract has come to an end. "During his tenure, key objectives relating to the safeguarding of assets, restoration of operational order, and protection of stakeholder interests were substantially achieved. Notwithstanding, the lapsing of Mr. de Silva, the FSRA would like to state that SCBS remains under curatorship," the notice reads in part.

It further states that: "The FSRA hereby presents an update that pursuant to the liquidation application that was lodged by SCBS under the curatorship to liquidate SDFF, a settlement agreement seeking restitution on funds initially invested on behalf of depositors was entered into between the two parties," FSRA management then assured investors and depositors of SCBS that all collected funds as previously reported in the last depositors' meeting held on 20th October 2025 at Sibane Sami Hotel remain safeguarded. "At this stage, the FSRA is prioritising monitoring the collection of the payments by SDFF under the continuing curatorship based on the signed settlement agreement, a careful assessment of the current position of SCBS to guide the next phase of regulatory and curatorship actions including assessment of what is permissible within the legal framework around the issue of any payments to Investors and Depositors of SCBS," the Regulator stated.

The FSRA Management reaffirmed its commitment to transparency, prudence, and the protection of all stakeholder interests.

"Communications will continue to be issued as material developments arise, and stakeholders are encouraged to rely solely on official FSRA updates for verified information," the notice stated in conclusion.

▲ *FSRA CEO Ncamiso-Ntshalintshali.*

The Status Capital Building Society (SCBS) has faced financial difficulties, leading to the regulator, FSRA appointing a curator and the focus is now on how SCBS will be managed post-curatorship and the further recovery of member finds, with stakeholders looking for transparency and stability.

E72 000 looted in Mbekelweni break-in

Stories By Thokozani Mazibuko

MATSAPHA Police have launched an investigation into a housebreaking and theft incident that occurred in the Mbekelweni area, leaving a 62 year old woman traumatised after returning home from church to find her house ransacked.

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni, the incident occurred on Sunday, 07 December 2025, at about 1500 hours. The victim, who resides in Mbekelweni, had earlier left her home to attend church and returned later in the afternoon, unaware that criminals had targeted her residence.

Upon arrival, the woman immediately noticed that something was amiss after finding the gate to her homestead wide open, despite having securely closed it before leaving. Her suspicion grew as she proceeded into the yard, where she observed signs of forced entry. A window and the kitchen door had been forcibly opened, indicating that unknown suspects had unlawfully gained access to the house.

She then entered the house and discovered that it had been broken into. A thorough search revealed that several valuable items had been stolen.

The total value of the stolen property is estimated at E72 000.00, highlighting the significant financial loss suffered by the victim.

Among the stolen items were two Apple iPads valued at E25 000.00, a Samsung tablet also valued at E25 000.00, a pink pad laptop worth E7 000.00 and an Acer laptop valued at E15 000.00. Police believe the suspects may have targeted electronic devices due to their high resale value and ease of transportation.

Assistant Superintendent Mnguni said police are treating the matter seriously and investigations are ongoing. She appealed to members of the public to assist law enforcement by providing any information that may lead to the arrest of the suspects and the recovery of the stolen property.

"The Royal Eswatini Police Service is appealing to anyone who may have information that can assist in the arrest of the suspect or suspects involved and the recovery of the stolen items to come forward and report such information," said Mnguni.

Members of the public with information are urged to contact the Manzini Regional Crime Branch Office Senior Superintendent Thabo Hlophe on 76068570, the Matsapha Desk Officer Inspector Langa on 76686833, or Matsapha Police on 2518 7111. Alternatively, information can be reported through the emergency lines by dialling 999, 9999 or 112.

Police have also called on residents to remain vigilant and strengthen security measures around their homes, especially during periods when houses are left unattended. They further encouraged communities to work closely with police by promptly reporting suspicious activities in their neighbourhoods.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service has reassured the public of its commitment to ensuring safety and bringing perpetrators of crime to justice, while urging citizens to play an active role in crime prevention.

Police hunt person of interest in Sithobelweni murder case

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service in Siphofaneni has intensified its search for a 33 year old man believed to be a key person of interest in a brutal murder that has shocked the Sithobelweni community and surrounding areas.

Police are looking for Gcina Sipho Bhila of Mpompotha in connection with the killing of a 20 year old woman whose life was violently cut short on Monday 24 November 2025. According to police reports the tragic incident occurred at about 1000 hours when the young woman was found dead inside her rented flat.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the victim had visible strangulation marks on her neck raising strong suspicions of foul play. Officers who attended the scene described it as deeply disturbing and confirmed that investigations are ongoing to establish the full circumstances surrounding the killing.

The identity of the victim has been withheld from the public pending further family notifications but police confirmed that she was a resident of Sithobelweni. Her death has sent waves of grief and fear through the community with many residents expressing concern over rising incidents of gender based violence. Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni said Bhila is not yet a suspect but is a person of interest who may assist investigators with crucial information related to the case. They stressed that locating him remains a priority as time is critical in resolving the matter and delivering justice for the victim.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service has appealed to members of the public to cooperate with law enforcement by sharing any information that could help trace Bhila or shed light on his movements before and after the crime.

How China's AI chips stack up against Nvidia's H200

U.S. President Donald Trump said the United States would allow Nvidia's H200 processors to be exported to China, though it remains unclear whether Beijing will give the green light to Chinese companies to purchase them.

China now has a number of AI chipmakers, as the country looks to wean itself off reliance on foreign technology. Here is how Chinese rivals compare with Nvidia's H200.

DO CHINESE CHIPS MATCH THE H200'S POWER?

No. The most advanced chip from Chinese suppliers is Huawei's Ascend 910C, which lags significantly behind the H200 in computing power and memory bandwidth, according to a recent report from the Institute for Progress.

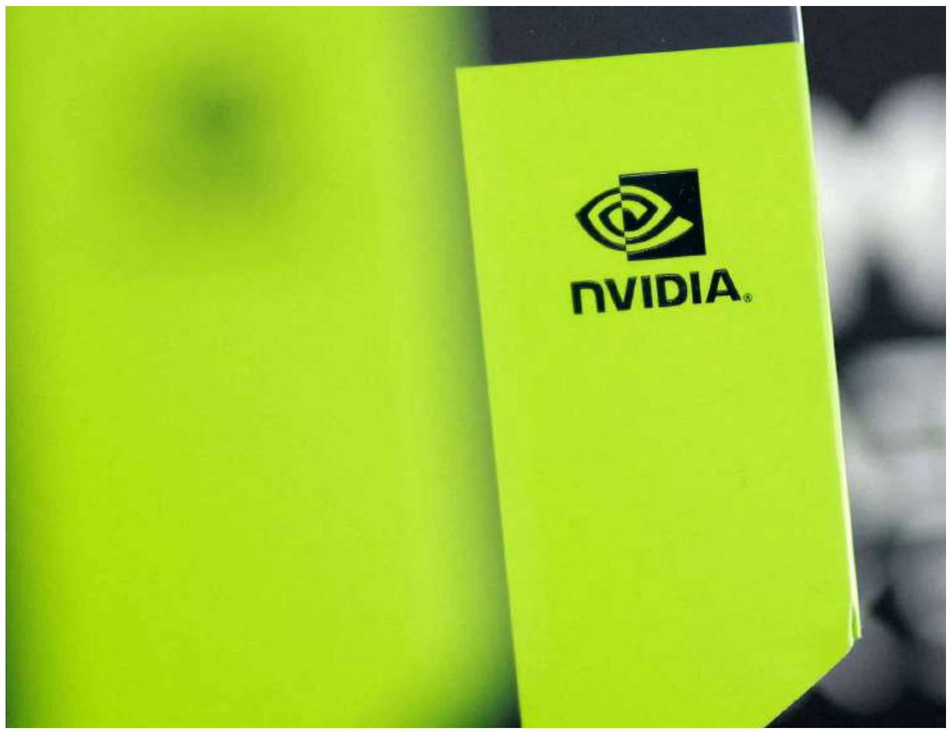
The 910C delivers total processing performance (TPP) of 12,032, compared with the H200's 15,840, and has memory bandwidth of 3.2 terabytes per second versus the H200's 4.8 TB/s.

Other domestic players offer less competitive products. Cambricon's (688256.SS), opens new tab top chip, the Siyuan 590, and Hygon's BW1000 both trail Huawei's 910C in performance.

ARE THERE ANY CHINESE CHIPS THAT CAN MATCH NVIDIA's H20?

Chinese chips can match Nvidia's H20, a downgraded processor Nvidia designed for the Chinese market but stopped shipping earlier this year after Washington banned it.

Huawei's 910B delivers total processing performance of 5,120, surpassing the H20's 2,368, according to a July Bernstein report. Cambricon's Siyuan 590, with TPP of 4,493, also outperforms the H20.



Nvidia logo is seen on graphic card package in this illustration.

WHY IS IT HARD FOR CHINESE FIRMS TO DISPLACE NVIDIA?

Nvidia's dominance stems from its CUDA software platform, which developers have long relied on to build AI models.

Switching to domestic chips would require developers to rewrite code and retrain on new platforms, a costly and time-consuming process.

Despite domestic chips outperforming the H20 in raw computing power, Chinese internet companies still prefer Nvidia's offering due to the lack of a mature domestic alternative to CUDA.

WHAT IS IN HUAWEI'S PIPELINE?

Huawei unveiled its AI chip roadmap in September, announcing three new products over the next three years.

The Ascend 950PR will launch in the first quarter of 2026, followed by a higher-memory variant, the 950DT, in the fourth quarter of 2026. The Ascend 960 is slated for the fourth quarter of 2027 and the Ascend 970 for the fourth quarter of 2028.

The 960's computing power roughly matches the H200, according to a September Bernstein report. However, it features significantly higher interconnect bandwidth at 2,200 gigabytes per second compared with the H200's 900 GB/s.

Higher interconnect bandwidth enables faster communication between chips in multi-chip systems, which is critical for training large AI models. This suggests Huawei is prioritizing networking speed over raw computing power.

HOW DOES NVIDIA'S H200 COMPARE WITH ITS LATEST CHIPS?

The H200 is an older generation of Nvidia's AI chips, built on its Hopper architecture launched in 2022, which preceded the latest Blackwell architecture revealed last year.

Nvidia's latest AI server, which packs 72 Blackwell chips into a single computer, improves the performance of some AI models by 10 times, compared with H200 servers, according to data published by the company earlier this month.

(**Reuters**)

Google faces EU antitrust investigation over AI Overviews, YouTube

ALPHABET'S Google faces an EU antitrust investigation into its use of publishers' online content and YouTube videos to train its artificial intelligence models.

The European Commission's second investigation into Google in less than a month underscores growing unease over Big Tech's dominance in new technologies that could shut out rivals, but could escalate tensions with the United States as EU laws adopted in the last few years have become a sore point in relations with Washington.

The EU competition enforcer said it was concerned that Google may be using publishers' online content for its AI-generated summaries known as AI Overviews without compensating them adequately and without giving them the option to refuse.

It expressed the same concerns regarding Google's use of YouTube videos uploaded by its users.

"Google may be abusing its dominant position as a search engine to impose unfair trading conditions on publishers by using their online content to provide its own AI-powered services," EU antitrust chief Teresa Ribera said on Tuesday.

"A healthy information ecosystem depends on publishers having the resources to produce quality content. We will not allow gatekeepers to dictate those choices," she added. (**Reuters**)

The Google logo is seen outside the company's offices in London, Britain.

Indian AI royalty proposal targets data practices of OpenAI, Google

An Indian government panel has proposed requiring AI companies to pay content creators a share of revenue for using their work to train models, a setback for companies such as OpenAI and Google that back free access to publicly available data.

The step comes as governments worldwide are fast developing regulations to resolve AI-related copyright disputes, as AI companies say they are making fair use of material generated by content owners.

AI firms should be able to access Indian content for training but should pay royalties to a central body representing copyright holders, the panel, set up in April, said in a report published on Monday.

India's plan marks a sharp divergence from jurisdictions like the United States, where AI giants say training models on publicly available data constitutes "fair use" for which they should not be charged.

AI firms such as OpenAI and Google Gemini, which count India among their top user markets, did not respond to requests for comment.

NO OPT-OUT

Industry and the public have 30 days to challenge the Indian plan, which faces review by government officials.

OpenAI is locked in a court battle triggered by accusations from Indian news agency ANI over use of copyrighted content. The company has repeatedly denied wrongdoing and said its use of online content amounted to fair use.

While Japan gives AI firms broad exemptions for use of such content, the European Union has stricter rules that allow content owners to opt out of such use.

(**Reuters**)

Thailand says tariffs must not be used to force peace with Cambodia

THE threat of tariffs should not be used to pressure Thailand to start talks with Cambodia and halt renewed border fighting, the Thai foreign minister told Reuters on Tuesday, underlining that it was up to its neighbour to de-escalate the conflict.

Hostilities re-ignited on Monday after weeks of simmering tensions, killing at least 12 people and forcing hundreds of thousands to flee border areas, with both Southeast Asian nations accusing the other of firing the first shots.

The violence was the worst between the two neighbours since July, when U.S. President Donald Trump intervened by warning that negotiations for lower trade tariffs would be frozen unless both sides stopped hostilities. That led to an expanded ceasefire signed in October in Trump's presence.

"We don't think tariffs should be used to pressure Thailand to get back to the joint declaration, to get back to a dialogue process," Sihasak Phuangketkeow said in an interview in Bangkok, referring to the enhanced ceasefire agreement.

"You have to separate the issue of Thai-Cambodia relations from the issue of the trade talks."

Monday's clashes have since expanded across much of their 817-km (508-mile) land border, with exchanges of heavy artillery and rockets.

▲ *Thailand's Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow speaks during a press conference on the sidelines of the 47th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.*

Trump has yet to comment on the renewed fighting but an administration official on Monday said the president was "committed to the continued cessation of violence and expects the governments of Cambodia and Thailand to fully honour their commitments to end this conflict".

Sihasak said the current situation with Cambodia was not conducive for third-party mediation, insisting that Phnom Penh would have to show sincerity and make the first move.

"If the other side feels that they want to really end the conflict, then we're waiting to listen to what they have to say," he said.

"What Cambodia can do is stop what they're doing," he added, "and say that they're ready to have talks."

A spokesman for Cambodia's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

PATH OF PEACE OR MORE CONFLICT

Cambodia insists that it is seeking to abide by the ceasefire and the expanded agreement signed in October, charging Thailand with aggression.

Hun Sen, the country's influential former leader, said on Tuesday that Cambodia had waited 24 hours to honour the truce before launching counter-attacks overnight.

Unless Cambodia stopped hostilities and came to the table, Sihasak warned that the situation could worsen, even as Thailand deployed its superior weaponry, including fighter jets, to strike across the border.

"There are two paths that we can take: the path of trying to reduce tension and work towards peace, or the path of more conflict and more losses," he said.

Thailand has repeatedly accused Cambodia of violating the October agreement, and pulled out of the pact last month after a landmine blast along the border maimed a Thai soldier.

Seven Thai soldiers have been seriously wounded by landmines that Bangkok claims have been freshly planted, a charge that Phnom Penh denies.

Some of these mines on the frontier were likely newly laid, Reuters reported in October, based on expert analysis of material shared by Thailand's military.

Sihasak said that any ceasefire offer from Cambodia, however, would have to be vetted by the Thai armed forces, which said on Monday that it had set a target of crippling Cambodia's military capability.

(**Reuters**)

200,000 flee new advance of Rwanda-backed rebels in Congo despite Trump peace deal

Two hundred thousand people have fled their homes in eastern Congo in recent days, the United Nations said, as Rwanda-backed rebels march on a strategic town just days after Donald Trump hosted the Rwandan and Congolese leaders to proclaim peace.

In a statement released late on Monday, the U.N. said at least 74 people had been killed, mostly civilians, and 83 admitted to hospital with wounds from escalating clashes in the area in recent days.

Local officials and residents said the Rwanda-backed M23 group has been advancing towards the lakeside town of Uvira on the border with Burundi, and battling with Congolese troops and local groups known as Wazalendo in villages north of the town.

The U.S. president hosted the presidents of Rwanda and Congo in Washington on Thursday for a ceremony to sign a pact affirming U.S. and Qatari-brokered commitments to end the war.

"Today we're succeeding where so many others have failed," Trump said, claiming his administration had ended a 30-year conflict that had led to the deaths of millions.

Reuters reported on Monday that the rebels had captured Luvungi, a town that had stood as the front line since February, and that fierce fighting was underway near Sange and Kiliba, villages further along the road towards Uvira from the north.

Rwanda denies supporting the rebels in Congo, although Washington and the United Nations say evidence of Rwandan backing is clear. Prior to the latest upsurge in fighting, the conflict had already displaced at least 1.2 million people.

▲ *Congolese civilians who fled from Goma, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo following fighting between M23 rebels and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), arrive at the border-post as they are received by Rwandan authorities in Gisenyi, Rubavu district, Rwanda.*

Reuters could not determine whether the rebels had captured Sange. A local official and several local residents said they had fled ahead of M23's expected arrival. M23 said it had captured the town. A Congolese army spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment.

The State Department said late on Monday that the U.S. was deeply concerned by the ongoing violence.

"Rwanda, which continues to provide support to M23, must prevent further escalation," a spokesperson said.

In a speech to lawmakers on Monday, Congo's president Felix Tshisekedi accused Rwanda of violating the commitments it made in Washington.

A senior Trump administration official said Washington was monitoring the situation, working with both Congo and Rwanda, and that "the president has made clear to both sides that implementation is what he will judge, and as he stated, he is expecting immediate results."

(**Reuters**)

Nigerian students to reunite with families after kidnapping ordeal

A group of 100 Nigerian schoolchildren who were rescued from kidnappers were set to be reunited with their families on Tuesday after undergoing medical checks in central Niger state, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) said.

The students are among more than 300 pupils and 12 staff seized by gunmen from St Mary's boarding school in the early hours of November 21, in one of the country's worst mass kidnappings in over a decade.

"We are currently in transit from Minna to Papiri with the 100 students. By now I believe their parents are waiting at the school to receive us," said Daniel Atori, the CAN spokesperson in Niger.

Papiri is a hamlet in Niger, a 7-hour drive from Minna, the capital of Niger.

Dauda Gwanja, a parent, said he got a call to go to the school to receive his 15-year-old son.

"We look forward to reuniting with our son and praying that this never happens again," he said.

Apart from those freed on Monday, 50 of the kidnapped schoolchildren managed to escape soon after they were seized, and more than 100 are still unaccounted for.

(**Reuters**)

▲ *Rescued schoolchildren from St. Mary's School arrive at the Niger State Government House after being freed from captivity following their abduction by gunmen, in Minna, Nigeria.*

Young Stunna set for Mdzimba View show

Stories By Siphesihle Dlamini
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SOUTH African Amapiano sensation Young Stunna is gearing up to headline an electrifying event at Mdzimba View Shisanyama.

The event, titled 'Not Your Normal Ladies Night,' is scheduled for December 18, 2025, and is already generating significant buzz among music lovers and partygoers alike.

The organisers have set a distinct dress code for the ladies attending the event, miniskirts, adding a playful and stylish vibe to the night. Presale tickets are priced at E100, offering early access to fans eager to secure their spot, while tickets at the gate will cost E150. This pricing strategy aims to encourage early attendance and build momentum leading up to the event.

Young Stunna, born Sandile Fortune Msimango, has become a household name in South African music, particularly in Amapiano. His rise to stardom is marked by his infectious hit singles such as 'Bopha' and 'Adiwele,' which have resonated widely with audiences across the continent. His collaborations with heavyweight producers DJ Maphorisa and Kabza De Small have further cemented his reputation as one of the leading voices in contemporary South African music.

His debut studio album, 'Notumato' (2021), was a game-changer, reaching number one on South African charts and earning Platinum certification from the Recording Industry of South Africa (RiSA).

Young Stunna's musical journey began early; he started making music at the age of 13. Initially, he pursued hip-hop from 2012, but his transition to Amapiano marked a turning point in his career. The name 'Young Stunna' was affectionately given to him by fans in Daveyton, the township where he grew up, reflecting his youthful energy and rising status. His breakthrough came in early 2021 when he featured on the smash Amapiano hit "Bopha" by Felo Le Tee and Mellow & Sleazy, which propelled him into the spotlight as a key member of the Piano Hub roster.

▲ *Young Stunner is set for Mdzimba View.*

Master P joins 'Mfowethu uGrend?' camp

ESWATINI's celebrated DJ Master P has recently been announced as a key participant in the upcoming 'Mfowethu uGrend?' camp, an innovative men-only initiative focused on confronting the often-overlooked mental health challenges faced by men.

This groundbreaking event is set to take place from December 19 to 21, 2025, at the scenic Malolotja Nature Reserve.

The camp is the brainchild of the Gogo & S'lwane Care Foundation, led by the popular comedians and social media influencers Gogo Eswatini and S'lwane. Known for their viral "Lugodvo Kimi" TikTok trend that captured national attention, the duo has expanded their influence beyond entertainment to champion a cause critical to the well-being of Eswatini's communities.

Joining DJ Master P in this vital conversation is a distinguished panel of experts and community leaders. The camp's sessions will be moderated by Mfundo "Ndosh" Simelane and feature voices such as Mtera Thwala, Clement Dlamini, Malungelo Mamba, Lethumusa Simelane, and Dumsani "Njobo" Mamba. Gogo Eswatini and S'lwane will host the event, guiding participants through the program with empathy and understanding.

At the core of 'Mfowethu uGrend?' lies a powerful philosophy, healing men today is essential for the health, prosperity, and stability of future generations. The camp is designed as a sanctuary where men can confront their struggles without fear of judgment, recognising the urgent need to address the escalating mental health crisis among men in Eswatini and beyond.

▲ *DJ Master P.*

S'lwane explained the motivation behind the camp with stark clarity, highlighting the visible signs of distress in society. "We looked within ourselves, searched within our own families and communities. We read newspapers, saw it on TV and heard about it on the radio. Worse, even our social media timelines are littered with it. From the attempted suicides to the completed ones, to the sexual and gender-based violence. The red flags are all over us, unmistakable. The crisis that is men's mental ill-health is one we feel we can no longer ignore."

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

Obsession headlines major show in Moz

ESWATINI's star DJ Obsession is gearing up to headline a major event in Mozambique.

The much-anticipated show, titled "A Night with Obsession," is scheduled for December 13, 2025, at the renowned Sunflower Club in Mozambique.

This event not only highlights Obsession's growing influence beyond Eswatini's borders but also features a lineup of talented local artists, including Acoustic Soul, Russell, Yamkela, Mistosoul, Paris, and Sintour, who will serve as the master of ceremonies.

DJ Obsession expressed immense pride and excitement about headlining the show, especially as it represents his third performance at the Sunflower Club. "It comes with great pleasure to headline a show outside the country, let alone also tag along a few local entertainers," he said.

The significance of performing at such international venues extends far beyond a single event. For DJ Obsession, these opportunities are pivotal in growing his brand and breaking into new markets. "With such international shows, my brand is growing beyond boundaries," he explained. He stated that his ambition is clear, to headline more international events and continue elevating the profile of Eswatini's music industry on the global stage. Representing Eswatini, or emaSwati, on foreign soil is a responsibility that DJ Obsession and his team take seriously. He assured fans and supporters that they are committed to delivering a memorable performance that honours their heritage. "We promise to represent Emaswati well," he affirmed. "With the team of DJs assembled for this show, I believe we are going to give the Mozambique people a great show. We are looking forward."

The "A Night with Obsession" event is poised to be a landmark moment for Eswatini's music community, showcasing the country's talent and cultural richness to a wider audience. DJ Obsession's journey reflects the growing trend of African artists crossing borders and gaining recognition on international stages.

▲ *DJ Obsession.*

SA trio to ignite Espinho Lounge

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE Espinho Lounge in Siteki is gearing up for an electrifying musical event this December, featuring a powerhouse South African trio, Intaba Yase Dubai, Duncan, and Simphiwe Majozi.

▲ *South African trio, Intaba Yase Dubai, Duncan, and Simphiwe Majozi.*

This highly anticipated Summer Vibe show is scheduled for December 20, 2025.

The event lineup boasts not only the headline trio but also a dynamic roster of local talent, including DJ Njebza, Moon Elo, Mike, and Zonke, with Bayanda serving as the master of ceremonies.

Ticket pricing reflects the expected demand for this event, with presale tickets available at E60, gate tickets at E80, and a late entry fee of E100 after 10 pm.

This tiered pricing structure encourages early attendance while accommodating those who prefer to join the party later in the evening.

Intaba Yase Dubai, whose real name is Lindokuhle Msomi, originates from Mthandeni in the KwaMaphumulo area of KwaZulu-Natal. Known widely for his hit single 'Sbali,' Intaba Yase Dubai has carved a niche in the South African music scene with his unique blend of soulful melodies and Afro-house rhythms.

His collaborations with Eswatini's Lyrikal Busta, including tracks like '365 Days' and the recent release 'Mtukulu,' have further cemented his reputation as a versatile and innovative artist.

Simphiwe Majozi is a multifaceted talent, celebrated both as an actor and a singer. He gained widespread recognition for his role as Sbusiso 'Sbu' Remembrance Makhathini on the popular South African TV show 'Uzalo.' Since his debut, Simphiwe Majozi has become a fan favourite and one of the industry's rising stars, seamlessly balancing his acting career with his passion for music.

Rapper Duncan, born Sphamandla Mbambo in Durban, has made significant waves in the South African hip hop scene.

With a string of hit songs and notable collaborations, including work with the renowned Kwaito group Big Nuz, Duncan has established himself as a formidable presence in the music industry. Tracks like 'Straat Sami' and 'Isukile' showcase his lyrical prowess and ability to connect with audiences through authentic storytelling.

As 4 Jerry P to release 'Inkhanyeti' this Friday

ESWATINI'S music scene is poised for a fresh wave of inspiration as local artist As 4 Jerry P prepares to release his highly anticipated new single, "Inkhanyeti."

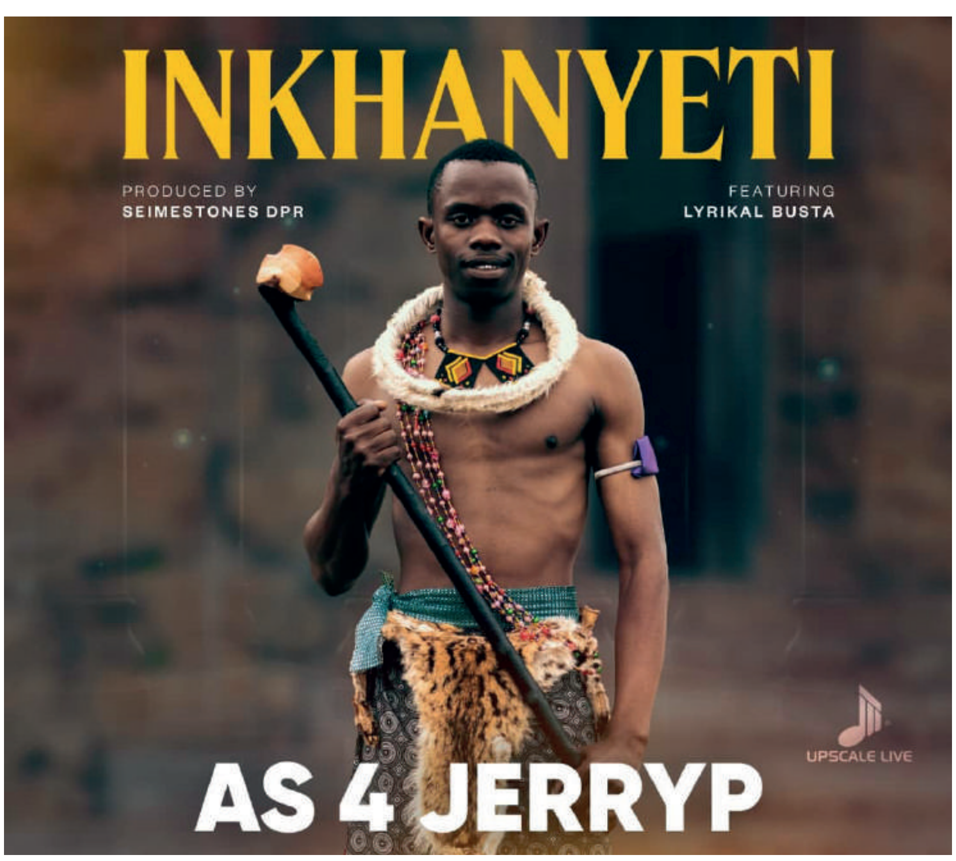
The song is slated for release this Friday across all major digital streaming platforms. As 4 Jerry P, widely recognised for his hit "Mlentengamunye," shared insights into the meaning behind "Inkhanyeti," which translates to "Star" in English.

The track is a deeply personal and motivational record that celebrates growth, purpose, and the inner light that resides within every individual. Drawing from his own journey of rising from humble beginnings and overcoming adversity, the artist crafts a narrative that resonates with anyone who has ever faced doubt or hardship.

"The song was inspired by my personal journey rising from humble beginnings, overcoming challenges, and choosing to believe in my own potential even when circumstances were against me," As 4 Jerry P explained. He highlighted the collaboration with South African rapper Lyrikal Busta as a significant element that adds emotional depth and power to the track.

"The collaboration with Lyrikal Busta adds power and emotion, bringing two unique voices together to deliver a song that motivates anyone who has ever doubted their worth. The title represents that no matter where you come from, you were born to shine," he remarked.

At its core, "Inkhanyeti" carries a simple yet profound message: everyone harbours a star within themselves. The lyrics speak directly to those moments when individuals feel invisible or underestimated, reminding them that their dreams are valid and their journeys matter.



▲ *'Inkhanyeti' artwork.*

The song encourages listeners to rise above negativity, maintain focus, and confidently pursue their purpose. "It's a reminder that your breakthrough is possible, and that nobody can dim the light that God placed inside you," he added. The creative process behind "Inkhanyeti" was described as organic and inspiring. The beat, crafted by producer Seimestones DPR, immediately resonated with As 4 Jerry P, sparking a natural flow of ideas that shaped the song's concept. Once the initial track was completed, it was sent to Sibusiso Simelane at Upscale Live, who facilitated the addition of Lyrikal Busta's verse.

▲ *Bexta.*

Bexta joins 'A Festive Holiday Comedy Show'

THE festive season in Eswatini is set to ignite with uproarious laughter as the much anticipated 'A Festive Holiday Comedy Show' prepares to light up the Mbabane Theatre Club on December 13, 2025.

This comedy offering is to feature the dynamic addition of Bexta, a Botswana-born, Zimbabwe-raised South African comedian and actor whose rising star adds extra sparkle to an already stellar lineup. Scheduled to start promptly at 6:59 pm, the show is a vibrant fusion of some of the sharpest comedic talents from both Eswatini and South Africa.

Among the South African headliners are Thando, known for his clean, observational wit that resonates widely; Ntuthuland, whose expressive facial comedy alone can reduce any crowd to fits of laughter; Dulas, an emerging talent who masterfully combines physical comedy with quick improvisation; and the electrifying duo Gap & Salad, celebrated for their rapid-fire two-man skits and magnetic stage chemistry.

Representing Eswatini's comedy scene are heavyweights Dr Shakes, Mdura, Cedric, and Ntsetselelelo. Tickets for this laughter-packed evening are priced at E120 and can be purchased via MojaTicket.

Mdura, both an accomplished comedian and the event organiser, shared insights into the vision fueling this production. He described the show as a continuation of a deliberate mission that began earlier in the year and has gained momentum with each successful performance. For him, comedy is more than just entertainment; it is a vital art form that unites communities through shared joy and laughter.

"Our job is to entertain and give emaSwati the best entertainment they deserve," Mdura emphasised, highlighting the commitment behind the event's creation. Reflecting on the inspiration for the show, Mdura recounted how, following the successful Thenjiwe Unplugged performance in October, he and South African comedian Thando envisioned something bigger. Their goal was to bridge the comedy scenes of Eswatini and KwaZulu-Natal, creating a collaborative platform that celebrates the best of both worlds.

11 things to ask your doctor after you start a new diabetes treatment

A DOCTOR can answer questions about your new diabetes treatment plan, such as what symptoms, side effects, and drug interactions to expect and how to measure blood sugar levels.

Starting a new diabetes treatment may seem tough, especially if you have been on your previous treatment for a long time.

However, a doctor can answer your questions and help you on your journey.

Here are some questions to discuss with your doctor before receiving your new treatment plan or within the first year of starting.

1. Are these side effects related to my medication?

Some medications for diabetes may cause potential side effects, such as:

- nausea
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- stomach pain
- metallic taste in your mouth

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms soon after starting a new treatment, speak with your doctor. They could help you figure out if these are from your medications and advise you on how to treat them.

2. Will my side effects go away?

In many cases, side effects of diabetes medications get better over time.

However, long-term use of diabetes medications may lead to vitamin B12 deficiency. This may cause symptoms like fatigue, faintness, and dizziness.

If your side effects don't improve after 30 days of starting a new treatment, ask your doctor when you can expect improvement or when you might consider other diabetes treatment options.

3. Are my blood sugar levels OK?

A healthcare professional will help you establish your target blood sugar levels.

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), blood sugar level targets depend on whether you're in one of two states:

Fasting (preprandial plasma glucose): Measured 8 hoursTrusted Source after consuming food, the target blood sugar level should be 80–130 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL).

After eating (postprandial plasma glucose): Measured 1–2 hours after starting to eat, the target blood sugar level should be less than 180 mg/dL.

It's important to regularly monitor your blood sugar and share the results with your doctor. If your levels aren't optimal, ask them how you can stabilize them.

4. How often should I check my blood sugar levels?

Your doctor will help you determine how often to check your blood sugar levels, as this may depend on your treatment goals, needs, and plan.

They may recommend checking your levels before or after meals, exercise, and sleep.

When starting a new treatment, your doctor may want you to check your blood sugar more often throughout the day. After 30 days, you may be able to check less often.

5. What are some signs that my blood sugar is too high or too low?

Low blood sugar levels are known as hypoglycemia, while high blood sugar levels are called hyperglycemia.

Hypoglycemia

Some diabetes medications may lower your blood sugar when taken on their own or in combination with other diabetes treatments. Hypoglycemia may cause symptoms like:

- hunger
- sweating
- confusion
- trembling

It's important to ask your doctor what to do if you experience symptoms of low blood sugar, as this may lead to several complications if left untreated. These may includeTrusted Source:

- clumsiness, as if you're intoxicated
- seizures
- loss of consciousness
- Hyperglycemia

You may not feel the symptoms of hyperglycemia, especially if you have elevated blood sugar levels regularly.

That said, some warning signs of hyperglycemia include:

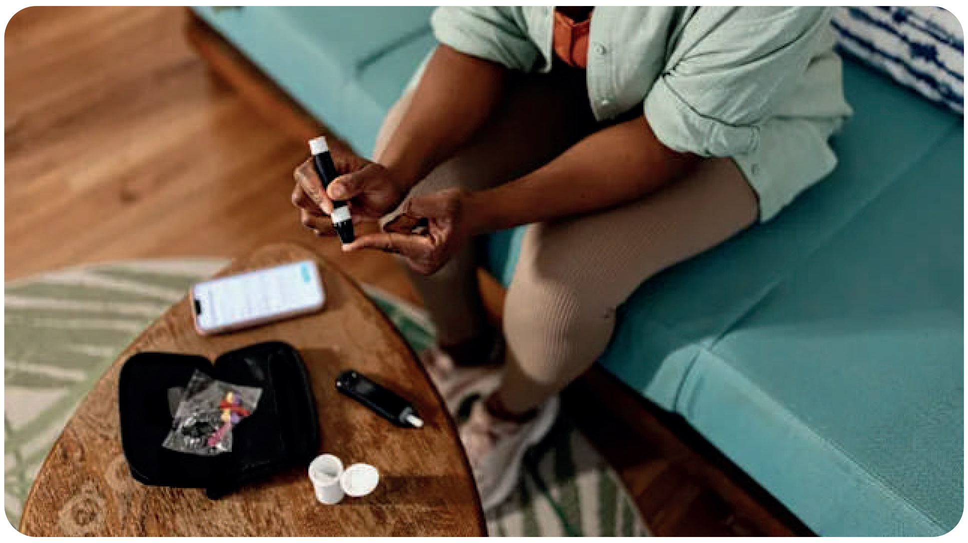
- frequent urination
- increased thirst
- increased hunger
- blurred vision
- fatigue
- cuts and sores that won't heal

Over time, long-term hyperglycemia may lead to complications that could affect your eyes, kidneys, nerves, and blood vessels. 6. Can you check my A1c levels to see if my numbers have improved?

Your A1c level is an important indicator of how well you manage your blood sugar. It measures your average blood glucose levels over 2–3 months.

According to the ADA, your A1c level should be 7% or less. However, your doctor may want it lower or higher, depending on your age, health status, and other factors.

It's a good idea to have your A1c level checked 3 months after starting treatment and then every 6 months once you've reached your target A1c goal.



7. Do I need to tweak my diet or exercise plan?

Diet and exercise both play important roles in managing diabetes.

Speak with your doctor every 3–6 months to determine whether your current exercise and diet plans are good for your condition.

You may also ask them whether foods interact with your new diabetes treatment. The American Heart Association (AHA)Trusted Source suggests that grapefruit, some cheeses, alcohol, and licorice may interact with some medications.

8. Can I have my cholesterol and blood pressure levels checked?

Maintaining healthy blood lipid and blood pressure levels is an important part of any good diabetes treatment plan.

People with diabetes are also two timesTrusted Source more likely to have high blood pressure compared with people who don't have diabetes.

You may want to get your cholesterol and blood pressure levels checked every 3–6 months after starting a new diabetes treatment.

9. Can you check my feet?

Medical professionals associate diabetes with several foot problems, includingTrusted Source:

- nerve damage
- foot deformities
- foot ulcers that won't heal
- blood vessel damage, leading to poor blood flow in your feet

You can ask your doctor to check your feet at every visit. They may also give you a comprehensive foot exam at the 1-year mark after starting a new treatment to ensure your feet are healthy.

10. Should I have my kidney function checked?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)Trusted Source, uncontrolled blood sugar may lead to kidney damage over time.

Speak with your doctor about getting a urinalysis within 3 months of starting a new diabetes treatment to check whether your kidneys are functioning properly.

11. Will I ever be able to stop this treatment?

In some cases, diabetes treatment may be temporary. If lifestyle changes such as a more balanced diet, regular exercise, and weight loss are successful, you may be able to stop taking or reduce some medication.

(**Health Line**)

Jesus added to Arsenal's Champions League squad

GABRIEL Jesus has been added to Arsenal's Champions League squad as the Brazil striker steps up his long-awaited return from injury.

Jesus has not played for Arsenal since January after suffering a knee injury during an FA Cup tie against Manchester United.

The 28-year-old is back in training and has been an unused substitute for the Gunners' recent matches against Chelsea and Brentford.

With Arsenal's teenage winger Max Dowman picking up an ankle injury in an under-21 match last weekend, Jesus has been elevated to the Champions League squad in time for Wednesday's clash with Club Brugge in Belgium.

"Gabriel Jesus has replaced Max Dowman on our UEFA A list with immediate effect. Therefore, Gabby is eligible to play in our match against Club Brugge in Belgium on Wednesday night," a statement on Arsenal's website said.

Jesus's return is a boost to Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta after injuries to Viktor Gyokeres and Kai Havertz forced him to use Spain midfielder Mikel Merino as his central striker.

Arsenal are top of the Premier League despite last weekend's loss to Aston Villa and are also in pole position in the Champions League group phase after five successive wins in the tournament.

Having been removed from the Champions League squad, Dowman will not be eligible to play for Arsenal in UEFA competitions until 6 February.

(**Supersport**)

▲ *Gabriel Jesus.*

Alonso under pressure but upbeat as Real prepare for City clash

REAL Madrid manager Xabi Alonso faces mounting pressure ahead of Wednesday's Champions League group-stage meeting against Pep Guardiola's Manchester City, but the Spaniard was confident the team could turn their poor form around.

Sunday's 2-0 loss to Celta Vigo, in which Real were reduced to nine players after defenders Fran Garcia and Alvaro Carreras were sent off, left the club second in LaLiga with 36 points, four behind leaders Barcelona.

"Football can change quickly... for good or for bad," Alonso told a press conference on Tuesday. "After the Celta match, we've already drawn our conclusions.

"Now it's just City in our minds. It's the Champions League, we're at the Bernabeu. It will be different because of the energy that's created. That's what's on our minds, what's ahead of us."

Asked whether his job could be at risk if Real falter against City, Alonso remained defiant.

"When you coach Real Madrid, you have to be prepared for situations like this. We are a team, we are all united," he said.

"To reverse the disappointment, which is normal, all we're thinking about now is City."

Wednesday's clash will be the 13th meeting between the clubs in the past decade, a rivalry that has intensified as Real and City combined to claim three of the last four Champions League titles.

Real won the competition in 2022 and 2024, beating City en route to both titles, while the English side lifted their maiden Champions League trophy in 2023 after overcoming the Spanish club in the semifinals that year.

Despite a disappointing run in recent weeks, with two victories in their last seven matches across all competitions, Alonso remained optimistic.

"We're all in this together. United. Convinced that this is an opportunity. We need to have the energy to connect with the Bernabeu. If that happens, we have a chance to win," he said.

"In football, you have to adapt and learn. Some days are good, others are not," he added. "But we are making progress with every match. Good thing we have a challenge tomorrow. The best way to move forward is to face it. It's a challenge that we must rise to."

Real are fifth in the Champions League standings on 12 points, three behind leaders Arsenal. City are ninth on 10 points, chasing a top-eight finish that would secure direct qualification to the last 16.

(**Supersport**)

▲ *Real Madrid manager Xabi Alonso.*

American Fritz to headline $1 million MGM Slam in Las Vegas

EIGHT of the world's elite men's professional tennis players, including American Taylor Fritz, will compete for a $1 million prize pool at the MGM Slam in Las Vegas next year.

The exhibition in March will feature a 10-point tiebreak knockout format. Fritz, the world No 6 and highest-ranked American, will headline the event. He will be joined by compatriot Tommy Paul, who is currently ranked 20th.

Also competing are Norway's Casper Ruud, Australia's Nick Kyrgios, Brazil's Joao Fonseca, France's Gael Monfils, Italy's Lorenzo Musetti and Kazakhstan's Alexander Bublik.

In its third year, the MGM Slam has featured several high-profile match-ups, including last year's showcase between Aryna Sabalenka and Naomi Osaka, and one of Rafael Nadal's final appearances before his retirement.

The event comes at a time when tennis is facing criticism over its relentless tour schedule.

In March, the Professional Tennis Players' Association (PTPA) filed a lawsuit against the sport's governing bodies, including the ATP and WTA, labelling the crowded calendar unsustainable.

Nevertheless, exhibition matches continue to be scheduled.

World No 1 Jannik Sinner and second-ranked Carlos Alcaraz, who have won nine of the last 10 Grand Slam titles between them, will meet in South Korea in January.

(**Supersport**)

▲ *Taylor Fritz.*

Pirates coach Ouaddou breaks silence on Mabasa's absence

ORLANDO Pirates head coach Abdeslam Ouaddou has set the record straight on the absence of Tshegofatso Mabasa from the matchday squad.

Mabasa has struggled to break into Ouaddou's starting lineup since the beginning of the 2025/26 Betway Premiership season.

The 29-year-old has featured in nine matches across all competitions for Pirates this season, scoring four goals and making one assist.

Despite his goal scoring prowess, Ouaddou has been preferring Evidence Makgopa and Yanela Mbuthuma upfront in recent matches instead of him.

With Pirates having signed another striker in Andre De Jong from Stellenbosch FC, speculation has been rife that Mabasa could be on his way out of the club.

Mabasa is a 'good' striker

Ouaddou, however, insists that Mabasa's absence is purely down to squad competition.

"To be honest, many people are asking me that question [about Mabasa's absence]. First of all, I don't have any issue with Mabasa. He's a player that I love, he's a good guy, he's a good striker," Ouaddou told Robert Marawa on 947 FM.

"But now I have a lot of strikers. I have a lot of players, and tactically, sometimes, regarding the defence I'm going to play, the team I'm going to play, I'm playing high, sometimes midblock. Sometimes, tactically, the profile of the defence we are going to play influences the choice of striker. My game model is very demanding.

"There are a lot of runs, pressing, and a lot of demand in terms of fitness. With my staff, we are choosing players regarding the opponents we are going to play.

"If the opponents are building from the back, we need someone to chase. He had the opportunity to play maybe not enough, but I have Makgopa, Mbuthuma, Mabasa, [Boitumelo] Radiopane, and [Sfiso] Luthuli, five players in one position.

(**The Citizen**)

"Record Streak Boosts Morocco"

A world record run of 18 consecutive victories has set up Achraf Hakimi-inspired Morocco perfectly for their 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon) campaign on home soil.

▶ *Achraf Hakimi.*

The streak began in June 2024 when they edged Zambia 2-1 in a 2026 World Cup qualifier, with the most recent a 4-0 hammering of Uganda last month in a friendly.

Spain had held the record since 2009 with 15 wins – a mark Morocco overtook by defeating Congo Brazzaville 1-0 two months ago in another World Cup qualifier.

Morocco have scored 55 goals in the 18 matches and conceded just four, while keeping 14 clean sheets.

It is this outstanding form, home advantage and the hoped-for presence of 2025 African player of the year Hakimi that has seen Morocco installed as firm favourites to be crowned African champions.

Paris Saint-German full-back Hakimi sprained an ankle after being fouled in a Uefa Champions League loss to Bayern Munich, but initial fears that he would miss the Afcon seem to be decreasing.

Speaking after the 2026 World Cup draw in Washington at the weekend, coach Walid Regragui said: "We hope he will be available for our first match against the Comoros.

"He is doing better. He is improving. He wants to be here (Morocco). He is our leader, our captain," said the tactician who defied the odds by taking Morocco to the 2022 World Cup semifinals in Qatar.

Hakimi, fellow full-back Noussair Mazraoui of Manchester United, goalkeeper Yassine 'Bono' Bounou, midfielder Sofyan Amrabat and forward Youssef En Nesyri form the core of the Atlas Lions line-up.

While Hakimi, wearing a medical boot at the awards ceremony in Rabat to protect his injury, was hailed as the best player in the continent, Saudi Arabia-based Bono won the best goalkeeper award.

Brahim Diaz from Real Madrid was not in Qatar, but has emerged as a clinical finisher. He was the leading scorer with seven goals in 2025 Afcon qualifying.

TREASURED TROPHY

Winning the most treasured football trophy in Africa would not only trigger joy across the kingdom, but also huge relief.

Morocco won their sole Afcon title in 1976 in Ethiopia.

The closest Morocco have come to conquering Africa since then was in 2004 when they fell 2-1 to hosts Tunisia in the final. Regragui was part of the losing team.

"My wishes are that many people will visit our beautiful land for the Afcon and that Morocco will be crowned champions," said the 50-year-old coach.

After facing Comoros in the December 21 opening match, Morocco meet Mali five days later and Zambia on December 29.

All the Moroccan matches in Group A will be at the 68 700-seat Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat, which will also stage the final.

Mali, arguably the strongest of the 12 contenders who have never won the competition, have set a minimum target of reaching the semifinals.

"I read an article describing us as 'big outsiders' – that is accurate," said coach Tom Saintfiet, who took debutants Gambia to the 2022 quarterfinals.

"Mali are on a par with teams like Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Senegal. We may not have as many global stars, but our group is cohesive, determined and talented," the Belgian added.

While Morocco and Mali are expected to be the two sides to progress from Group A, Comoros coach Stefano Cusin had a warning for his rivals.

"For the big African nations, playing against us is a bit like going to the dentist – nobody enjoys it," said the Canadian-Italian.

(**Supersport**)

Norris knows life will change as F1 champion, starting with No 1

LANDO Norris recognised life would change as Formula One world champion, although he hoped to stay the same as a person, and an immediate sign was the decision made on Monday to race with the No 1 on his McLaren next season.

The 26-year-old told Reuters Television, a day after he clinched the title in the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix in a three-way battle at Yas Marina, that he was setting aside his familiar No 4.

"I actually had to decide today," said the Briton, standing on a hotel balcony with the bright lights of Yas Marina reflected on the water behind him.

"In a way, I wanted to keep No 4, because I'm just happy with that and it goes well with my logo ... but I will go with No 1, because I have to. I have to.

"It can be my only opportunity in my life that I get to do such a thing, and not many people in the world get to do that kind of thing.

"And it's not for me. It's just for my mechanics, this is for my engineers. It's the fact that they get to run with the No 1 on the car, and I think it'll mean a lot more to them than it does to me as a number, and for me that's a lot more important."

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

Norris, whose breakfast of champions was an early morning McDonald's after a night of partying that left his throat and voice slightly the worse for wear,

(**Supersport**)

▲ *Lando Norris.*

‘Stingers’ for summit, E120k ‘carrot’!

. . . As wounded ‘Birds’, Buffaloes clash, Leopard, G. Mamba collide in derby fixture

By Chris Dlamini

Buffaloes players.

YET another top-of-the-table clash is on the cards on Wednesday (today) between leaders Nsingizini Hotspurs and third-placed Ezulwini United - they all have 19 points apiece.

Interestingly, match week 10 is more like ‘you snooze, you loose’, at least for the top four teams as second-placed Manzini Sea Birds also look to reclaim the summit after under two weeks since losing it to Nsingizini Hotspurs.

Meanwhile, Green Mamba are also in for the top spot, but must beat Royal Leopard to stand a chance. Outside the top four, Mbabane Swallows visit Young Buffaloes in an old and bitter rivalry clash. Enjoy our previews as we briefly look at the odds.

Insingizi in ‘invincible’ ‘Stingers’ hive

Ezulwini United vs. Nsingizini Hotspurs

Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Venue: Nsukuwansuku Stadium, Mhlume

Kick-off: 3pm

It is an away game for the reigning champions and current leaders Nsingizini Hotspurs. It is also their second top-of-the-table clash after dislodging early pacesetters and longest summit holders this season, Manzini Sea Birds over a week ago.

What is interesting about this one is that their rivals, Ezulwini United are now the only unbeaten side in the 16-team league and eyeing the top spot as well - the ‘Stingers’ have 19 points and two places lower than Insingizi Yezulu (Nsingizini). So, they are basically level on 19 points alongside second-placed Sea Birds. The latter will be away to Amawele in the capital city, also hoping to win as they could be back on top again. Five wins and four draws have put Ezulwini where they are, with their last two matches both wins. Insingizi has managed six wins deemed by three defeats and two draws including the goalless draw with Royal Leopard last Saturday.

The reigning champions beat Ezulwini United 2-0 when they last met in the league, but this Ezulwini is tougher than back then. A good game to watch and follow, as the two fight for the top spot and chase the big bucks - the E120 000 first round leaders incentive. None can afford to lose as other close rivals are a threat as well, but if not a draw, then one will lose.

PLAYERS TO WATCH:

Alvin Shabashie (Ez. United defensive midfielder)

Sizwe ‘Yeki’ Madumane (N. Hotspurs central midfielder)

LOG STANDINGS:

Ez. United - 3rd (19 points)

N. Hotspurs - 1st (19 points)

PERFORMANCE GUIDE:

Ez. United

W W D W D

N. Hotspurs

D W W W L

HEAD-TO-HEAD:

21/04/25

N. Hotspurs 2-0 Ez. United

24/11/24

Ez. United 0-1 N. Hotspurs

Leopard face ‘venomous’ revenge

Green Mamba vs. Royal Leopard

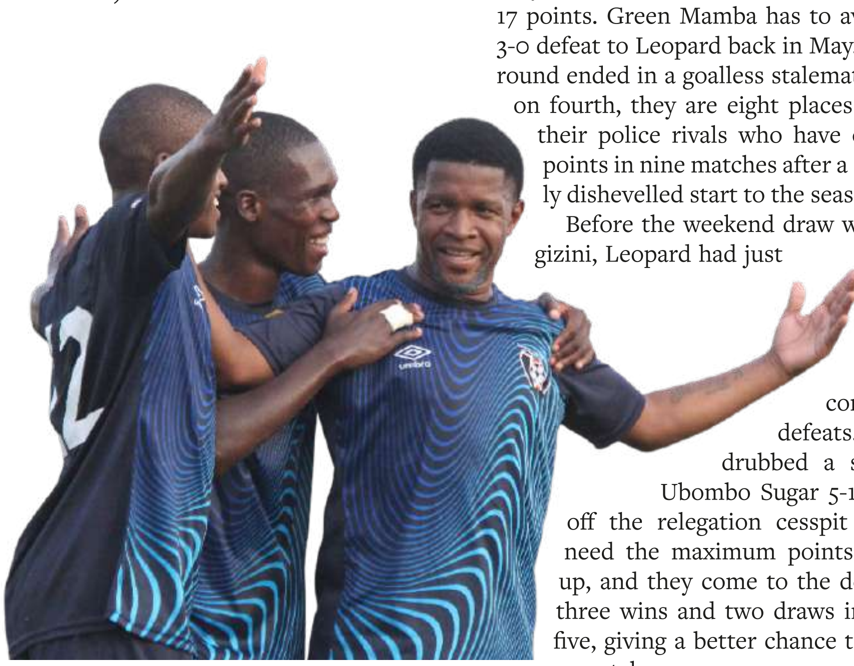
Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Venue: KaLanga Technical Centre, KaLanga

Kick-off: 3pm

Its a security forces derby - Correctional Services outfit Green Mamba is home and longing for last season’s revenge against police side, Royal Leopard in the Eastern part of the country. It is also more than just revenge but the top spot is also just close for them. Winning gets them closer, especially if Nsingizini Hotspurs and Ezulwini United draw as well as if Manzini Sea Birds drop points against rookies Amawele. A draw between Nsingizini and Ezulwini would mean 20 points apiece for the top two, the same tally if Green Mamba wins as they are on 17 points. Green Mamba has to avenge the 3-0 defeat to Leopard back in May. The first round ended in a goalless stalemate. Sitting on fourth, they are eight places ahead of their police rivals who have only nine points in nine matches after a shockingly dishevelled start to the season.

Before the weekend draw with Nsingizini, Leopard had just earned their first win after four consecutive defeats. They drubbed a struggling Ubombo Sugar 5-1 to come off the relegation cesspit and still need the maximum points to catch up, and they come to the derby with three wins and two draws in the last five, giving a better chance to win the match.



Ezulwini United players.

Swallows players.

PLAYERS TO WATCH:

Banele ‘Pupu’ Sikhondze (G. Mamba attacking midfielder)

Fanelo Tsabedze (R. Leopard attacking midfielder)

LOG STANDINGS:

G. Mamba - 4th (17 points)

R. Leopard - 12th (9 points)

PERFORMANCE GUIDE:

G. Mamba

W D W W W

R. Leopard

D W L L D

HEAD-TO-HEAD:

25/05/25

R. Leopard 3-0 G. Mamba

16/04/24

G. Mamba 0-0 R. Leopard

Bitter rivals in redemption ‘war’

Young Buffaloes vs. Mbabane Swallows

Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Venue: Mayaluka Stadium, Big Bend

Kick-off: 3pm

Its fierce one - a wounded Young Buffaloes and Mbabane Swallows facing off sparks nothing but a potential thriller. On top their defeats from the weekend, they are bitter rivals always fighting to for supremacy over the other - it even gets physical often times with tension gripping the fixture on and off the field.

Those who saw the scuffle involving Buffaloes and Highlanders can attest that is nothing compared to the rivalry between these two from a few years ago while the late Victor Gamedze was Swallows and Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) Chairman. =

Buffaloes will be all out to redeem themselves after their third consecutive fall to Highlanders since last season. The same applies for Tinyoni as Swallows are also affectionately called. The red and white side lost with a narrow 1-0 margin to Moneni Pirates. Buffaloes occupy the seventh spot in the standings with 13 points, while their capital city rivals have 11 points on number 11.

These statistics mean a win matters for both as they have fallen behind the leading pack where 19 points is the highest.

PLAYERS TO WATCH:

Bongwa ‘Owa’ Matsebula (Y. Buffaloes forward)

Sizolwethu ‘Nunu’ Shabalala (M. Swallows forward)

LOG STANDINGS:

Y. Buffaloes - 7th (13 points)

M. Swallows - 11th (11 points)

PERFORMANCE GUIDE:

Y. Buffaloes

L L W W W

M. Swallows

D D L L

Siteki Tennis Club conquers SA tourney

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

A new tennis youngster is on the rise. This is none other than Siteki Tennis Club youngster Joshua Joshan Eziebo, who has done the country proud after winning the Johannesburg Summer Open held over the weekend.

The youngster won the singles and doubles categories held in Gauteng.

The Lubombo-based side coach, Njabulo Mbhamali, congratulated the youngster for his achievement.

"Congratulations to the youngster for delivering a splendid performance in the international competition. We urge him to continue working hard in his career and will continue guiding him," he said.

Mbhamali also thanked their sponsors for assisting them during the trip.

"We are grateful for the support of our sponsors, such as the Kwakitsi Foundation and the Dr Cumming family, for assisting us during the trip. The assistance plays a key role in the development of tennis in the country," he said.

The Siteki Tennis Club is set to attend the Swaziland Building Society mixed tournament, scheduled for December 13, 2025, at the Matsapha UNESWA courts.

▲ *Siteki Tennis club player Joshan Eziebo with his international compatriot Ojeo Sinawio during the recent Johhanesburg summer tournament.*

▲ *The Siteki Tennis Club is set to attend the Swaziland Building Society mixed tournament, scheduled for December 13, 2025, at the Matsapha UNESWA courts.*

Tough outing for Taekwondo youngsters

▲ *Taekwondo juniors Sihlelwe Matsebula and Bongumusa Mkhatshwa with their international counterpart during the world taekwondo championships in Kenya.*

TAEKWONDO youngsters had a tough outing in the 2025 Junior World championships. The duo of Sihlelelwe Matsebula and Gcinumuzi Mkhatshwa both suffered early exits in the recent global junior championships held in Kenya.

The two artists were under the guidance of Kenyan coach Gladys Kironge.

Eswatini Taekwondo Federation Secretary Mbongeni 'Ndo' Sibandze commended the two athletes' performance.

We commend the performance of the two Youngsters despite the failure to advance to the next round. The games helped our athletes gauge themselves against the best athletes within their age groups," he said.

Sibandze further said they will now shift focus to the next edition of the World Junior Championships scheduled for Bulgaria.

We continue grooming the two athletes and other youngsters for the same tournament in 2027. We would like to thank EOCGA and ESRC for giving our athletes this opportunity, and the support of the two bodies plays a key role in the development of the sport in the country," he said.

Taekwondo is also part of Team Eswatini for the 2025 ANOCA Youth Games in Angola.

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art and combat sport involving primarily kicking techniques and punching. Depending on the style, Hyeong, Pumsae, or Teul are patterns that demonstrate a range of kicking, punching, and blocking techniques, gyeokpa is the art of breaking wooden boards, and in the combat sport kyorugi involves the kind of sparring seen in the Olympics. Taekwondo also sometimes involves the use of weapons such as swords and nunchucks (nunchaku). Taekwondo practitioners wear a uniform known as a dobok. Taekwondo is originally a martial art that was developed during the 1940s and 1950s by Korean martial artists with experience in martial arts such as karate and Chinese martial arts.

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

Cycling teams for Mpumalanga Tour

LOCAL cyclists are lined up for an international festive race in the Manzana Tour. The invitation race will take place on December 16, 2025, in Nhlazatshe.

The Eswatini Cycling Association announced the news on their Facebook page.

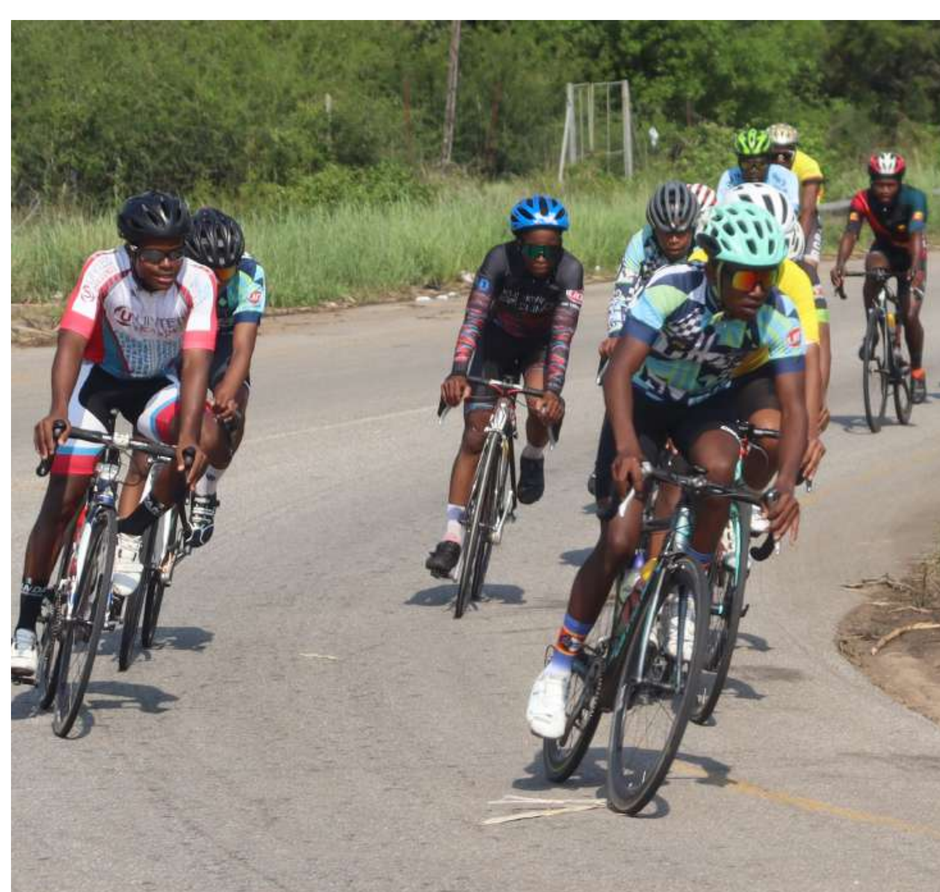
"The Eswatini Cycling Association officially wrapped up the 2025 cycling season — but the excitement isn't over just yet! South Africa is still alive with action, and on 16 December, we head to Nhlazatshe to join our counterparts for the inauguration of the Tour of Manzana 2025," the Association said.

The mother body further Local clubs to attend the upcoming race in numbers

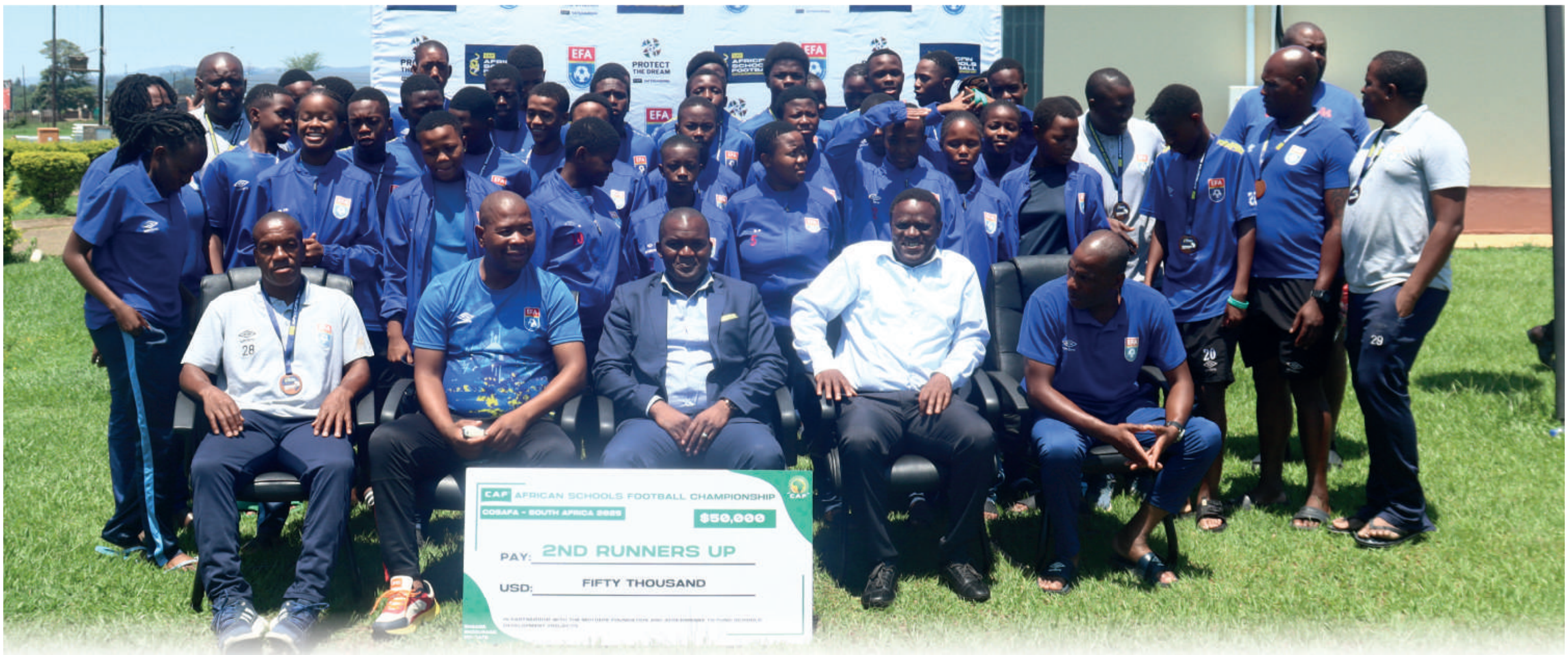
"Let's come out in our numbers, represent Eswatini with pride, and show our full support. Let's keep those pedals turning as we gear up for an even bigger and better 2026 season," the Association said.

The last domestic race was the MulaSport Lowveld challenge, which was held in Mhlume.

Local cycling teams include Team G, Kusekhaya, 4eva cycling club, MTN Khemani, Darkton Cycling, and Newcomm Wheels, among others.



▲ *Local riders in action during a race.*



Under-15 boys national team rake over E800 000 from COSAFA cup

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

PRIDE of the nation.

The national under-15 boys' team has won over E800 000 ($ 50 000) from the COSAFA School Under 15 tournament.

This comes after their third place in the annual international tournament held in Cape Town under the guidance of former Green Mamba and Xi Men in Flight Defender Sifiso 'Haiso' Dlamini.

The E853 895 worth cheque was presented to the Eswatini Football Association Chief Executive Officer, Frederick Mngomezulu on Tuesday at the Lobamba Technical Centre. Mngomezulu congratulated the team for its achievement.

"We are proud of the team's success, and this shows that the future of the sport is bright in the country. We will ensure that the players graduate in the next national team structure until the elite stages. We commend the good work that has been done by the technical bench," he said.

Mngomezulu said they would use the prize money to conduct a development program.

"We will use the prize money to conduct a program in the country that will benefit the sport and communities. This is part of the conditions for the funds from the sponsor," he said.

Meanwhile, the squad head coach 'Haiso' Dlamini said they are happy with the achievement of the team.

"We are proud of the team, and this shows that the future of the sport is bright. I believe we can do better as a country if we can have enough preparations for international competitions," he said.

▲ *Athletics Eswatini president Zakhele Dlamini and Gender Equity chairman welcoming new markerting and Communications Manager Victor 'Mavikane' Dlamini.*

'Mavikane' bounces back at Athletics

By Sibusiso Masilela
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SEASONED Sports administrator Victor 'Mavikane' Dlamini has bounced back to local Athletics leadership.

The Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association board member has been appointed as the Marketing and Communications Manager for Athletics Eswatini.

He previously held the same position in 2024 before stepping down due to the previous leadership turmoil that rocked the association.

He was announced by the association president, Zakhele Dlamini, during a press briefing held at Sigwaca House on Tuesday.

"We are pleased to announce the new spokesperson of the association. We are confident that he will take the sport to greater heights due to his experience in the sport," he said.

The incoming Marketing and Communications Officer said he was honoured by the appointment.

"I am humbled by the appointment, and I will work with the entire Athletics family in taking the sport to greater heights. We will hold more road running events in the four regions of the country in a bid to improve the standard of the sport in the country," he said.

Team PRO donates a food parcel to 'Gogo' Simelane

By Sibusiso Masilela
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CHARITY begins at home.

Local teams PROs have exercised the famous adage by donating food parcels to Sihlangu and XI Men defender Oscar 'Gogo' Simelane.

The presentation took place at Simelane homestead, Maphungwane, on Tuesday, where the former tough-tackling defender received food parcels worth E2 000 from a delegation of close to 10 Premier League teams' representatives.

The team's Public Relations Officer, Committee Chairman and Royal Leopard Chief Executive Officer Frank Hurube said the donation is a way of giving back to the community.

"We are humbled to donate food parcels to Simelane, who is one of the great players in local football. We believe the food will assist him during the festive seasons and will continue doing charity work around the country," he said.

Hurube also thanked local companies for supporting the initiatives.

"We are grateful for the support of local partners for supporting us with money for food parcels," he said.

Simelane thanked the football fraternity for the donation.

"I would like to thank the team PROs for the food hampers, and they will go a long way in assisting to meet my daily needs," he said.

Simelane played for the defunct Siteki-based side in the early 90s, and he has a couple of Sihlangu caps under his watch.

▲ *Team PRO's displaying food parcels donated to former XI Men and Sihlangu defender Oscar'Gogo' Simelane.*

Jesus added to Arsenal's CL squad

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'Mavikane' bounces back at Athletics

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U-15 boys rake over E800 000 from COSAFA Cup

...National Under-15 boys clinch third place in COSAFA School Under-15 tournament and receive a sum of US$50 000 (about E800 000) for their efforts. Page 19