



The Right Place

The Right Sunday



MARCH 12, 2017

PRICE: E6.00 (VAT INCLUSIVE)

SD CALLS FOR DUTY-FREE ACCESS TO INDIA **PAGE 4**



His Majesty King Mswati III shares a light moment with officials from Uganda at the exhibition hall during the 12th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership. Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mgwagwa Gamedze called for duty-free access to India at the same conference. **SEE MORE STORIES AND PICTURES ON PAGES 4-5.** (Pic: Len Mohale)



PULL-OUT

JOY **GRANTED** **HER WISH**



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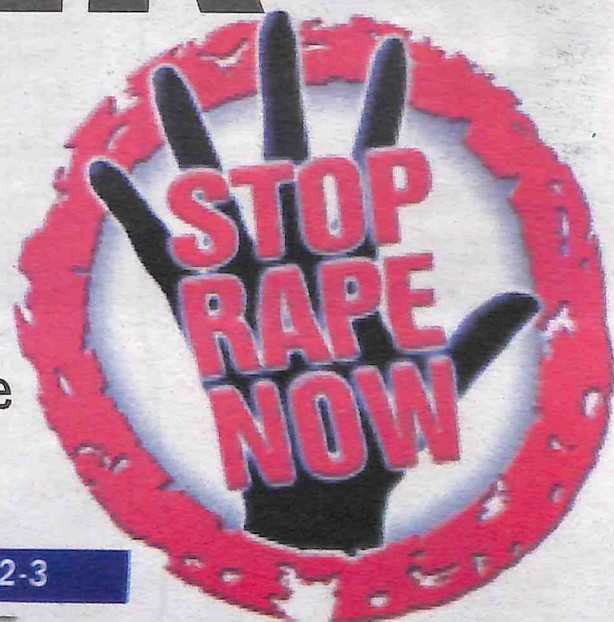
WOMEN **ACTIVISTS** **SLAM MP** **MJULUKO**

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'MY FATHER RAPED ME TO DISCIPLINE ME'

● The young woman has 13 years of brutal sexual assault allegedly in the hands of her uncle (*babe lomncane*) and later her father

PAGES 2-3



CLARIFICATION

'MY FATHER RAPED

STORIES BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

She will be turning 21 in June; however, the young woman has 13 years of brutal sexual experience allegedly at the hands of her uncle (*babe lomncane*) and later her father.

Instead of getting appropriate assistance from family members, her ordeal has now become a case of he-said-she-said and has been muddled by a bitter divorce wrangle between the people who brought her up.

"My uncle started sleeping with me when I was about seven years old and he was allowed to do so by my paternal grandmother," Zandile Magongo* said (not real name as she is a survivor of abuse) adding how her father took over when she was 12 and the last incident was allegedly last year in September or October, when she was home for the holidays.

This she revealed this past Thursday during her flight from South Africa as she said she was running away from possible retribution for hav-



ing disclosed that her father was abusing her.

The young woman has since 2012 been living in South Africa with

two sets of different family relatives as she was schooling there whereas her paternal family home is said to be Mankayane.

She said the alleged rape incidences occurred in different places such as Nhlanguano where her uncle lived and Msunduzi where her

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Parents' divorce squabbles murk incest allegations

"I wish they could divorce without putting my matter in the limelight as it happened to me.

I am the one who was abused by my father who slept with me and now I am out of school and everybody keeps talking about me," were comments by alleged incest survivor Zandile Magongo yesterday. Sounding exasperated, she said she was aware that her step mother was using her abuse as a trump card in their divorce debacle and this hurt her because she was the one who experienced abuse at the hands of her father.

"I am not sure I want to be here under such circumstances," she said, while being interviewed as she waited her turn at the Mbabane Police Service Station.

"I am old enough to decide how I wanted to report this to the police, not like this. My father has been abusive and I am not looking forward to meeting him after this," she said, adding how she was not for the idea of having the media on her case.

She said she was

however willing to state her case seeing as she did not want to be seen as being used in the divorce case. "I don't know why my mother keeps calling the media because this is hurting me," she said, adding how she was aware that her parents had been at loggerheads with a pending divorce but wished her matter was dealt with independently.

She stated that she felt used and being abused all over again by her step mother and father's situation, which she said was toxic to her life as well.

My father has been abusive and I am not looking forward to meeting him after this," she said, adding how she was not for the idea of having the media on her case.

Ex-wife out to tarnish my name: alleged perpetrator

The alleged perpetrator of the abuse has denied all allegations made against him, stating that the whole debacle was orchestrated by his ex-wife who could not get her head around the fact that he did not want her any more.

"I have never abused my daughter," Jeremiah Magongo said adamantly, while adding how he was willing and waiting to sue everybody involved.

The incensed man said he was not surprised that something like this would surface while there was a bitter divorce going on.

Relating the origins of the divorce, he alleged how he found his wife in a compromising position over a year ago when he visited her work place and attempts to salvage the relationship allegedly hit a snag as his wife then got involved with

their counselling pastor.

"My children came to visit me while bearing their mother's phone and I found messages between my wife and the pastor, which graphically described the extent of their relationship and what they got up to," he alleged.

Availing photographs of WhatsApp messages allegedly sent from a number belonging to a well-known pastor, who is also a businessman based in Mbabane, the father said he will not lie down and have his name dragged in the mud by a woman he referred to as his former wife as well as her lover.

"I know that the story has been circulated in the media by my ex-wife and her lover," he said on Friday night.

He revealed how he was visited by reporters from the Times SUNDAY on Wednesday where he was alerted of their alleged

shenanigans in painting him bad.

"This comes at the backdrop of my revealing their relationship as has been reported recently," he said, referring to Swazi News reports where the messages had been plastered for all to see.

He said he was at a loss at how his daughter could choose to side with a person she was not related to and accuse him of incest.

"Last year, my brother, who is based in South Africa where my daughter resided, called and told me that my daughter was accusing my other brother of having violated her in the past," he said.

He stated that while trying to get to the bottom of the matter of his brother abusing his daughter, he was then shocked to get reports that he too had abused his daughter.

SWAGAA appalled

When sought for comment on the issue that the young girl is facing, Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse stated the whole scenario was absolutely appalling.

"This is the opportune time for the state to seriously look into the enactment of strong legislations that will protect innocent survivors such as Zandile Magongo from such vultures," Communications and Advocacy Officer Slindelo Nkosi lamented.

She said the delay in the enactment of the pending Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill (SODVB) will

escalate similar cases into an uncontrollable cycle of violence, abuse and incest.

"Parents or guardians to the survivor ought to place the best interests of the child first before dealing with their own marital challenges," she said, adding how Zandile may have outgrown the status of being a child but she evidently needs the best psychological care and attention she deserves for her to heal through her ordeal.

"Professional intervention is most crucial for such instances and they are most welcome to receive our services at SWAGAA, working



SWAGAA Communications and Advocacy Officer Slindelo Nkosi.

in partnership with our stakeholders where relevant," Nkosi said.

TO DISCIPLINE ME'

father and his wife lived.

On Thursday, her frantic step mother sought assistance in getting the young woman back home following alleged threats from her father.

"On Wednesday, I was visited by people who said they were journalists from Swaziland," she said, recounting reasons behind her leaving the place she lived in within the Mpumalanga Province.

Know

"I didn't know who they were and I called my uncle (*babe lomncane*, not the one alleged to have initiated the rapes 13 years ago) to tell him there were people who were asking me to tell of my story," she said.

She was speaking about Times SUNDAY reporters who made their way to the small town located on the western side of the country on Wednesday.

Magongo revealed that she was fresh from school on the day as she is a Grade 11 pupil in one of the schools neighbouring the border.

She was confused and called her uncle as she had allegedly related the ordeal she faced in her father's hands recently and was then shocked to find reporters at the homestead where she sought refuge.

"I sent him a WhatsApp message and my father then called to tell me he would fix me up for revealing thesecret," she alleged, adding how she was blamed for the arrival of journalists whereas she was not aware of who had alerted them of her whereabouts.

She said she then alerted her step mother and asked her for assistance which then necessitated her leaving South Africa where she met the Sunday Observer news team at the border in the late afternoon on Thursday.

"At the beginning of the year, I left the country through the informal crossing when I attended school and there was no way I would flee through the same medium as I feared that my father would be there waiting for me following the threats he made," she said, adding her father would have by then have been alerted of her flight from the homestead.

Loss

She stated that she was at a loss as all she wanted was to attend school and finish so she could be independent of her family members who she does not trust anymore. "I told my uncle who I lived with last year that I was bothered by my father who had been sleeping with me since I was 12 and he at first was shocked but later started acting strangely towards me," she said.

She revealed how her ordeals occurred. "He would tell me he was punishing me for things I had done and would then have intercourse with me," she alleged. Over and above the forced intercourse, she alleged he would also take pictures of her private parts as well as her naked body. "I did not understand as to why he would do this to me at first and it was later that I understood it to be wrong hence my deci-

sion to tell my uncle who I thought would assist me," she said, adding how she was disappointed when her matter died a natural death with no assistance forthcoming and instead she got suspicious glances from family members who alleged she could be pregnant from a boyfriend, something she said she got a good talking to.

"I was really hurt last year October when I got flu and everybody, including my step mother and father, pointing out that I had fallen pregnant and terminated the pregnancy in the wake of reporting what my father was doing to me," she said.

Interviews with Magongo were conducted over a two-day period seeing as the first day her step mother did not allow her time alone with our news crew and would elect to respond on her behalf.

Yesterday, the young woman was found at the Mbabane Police Station where she had been advised to report her ordeal, seeing as without it being reported to the authorities, would be tantamount to hearsay.

Meeting

During the initial meeting on Thursday, the step mother was advised to report the matter at the police station as such serious allegations could not be ignored.

Yesterday morning, when Magongo was sought at her current hiding place, the household members revealed she was at the police station with her step mother.

Leave me out of it - Pastor

The pastor, who is said to have counselled the divorcing couple and then allegedly gone on to have an affair with the wife, yesterday requested to have his name left out of the whole debacle.

Samuel Mashaba* said he was aware of the story where he was accused of having counselled the couple following their problems and then turning around to have an affair with the wife.

"The husband stole the wife's phone and I don't know how he did it but he then presented messages purported to be from me to his wife where we were alleged to be talking about a relationship,"

the businessman-cum pastor said.

He said this after he was alerted that this publication was in possession of pictures of the messages with his number visible.

"I don't know how he did it but all I know is he allegedly stole the wife's phone and he was reported to the police and was requested to return it, something he did and then he threatened

"I want the child to be helped and this issue of my alleged down," he said. Pleading, he said it was of no use to anyone to air his perceived involvement in the whole issue as it was of no use to the girl."

me with revealing the messages to the media. He did that and I was ok with it because I knew I was innocent of what was purported to have been said by me in those messages," the

business man said. He said he would

prefer that the story be properly investigated for him to be completely exonerated. Of note is that he initially provided information pertaining to the young woman's incestuous rape, without divulging his relationship with the family as he stated he was an innocent bystander who got the information by chance. "I want the child to be helped and this issue of my alleged involvement with the wife lets the young woman down," he said.

Pleading, he said it was of no use to anyone to air his perceived involvement in the whole issue as it was of no use to the girl. "Look, the issue of the messages was not even in the divorce proceedings to show that I was not the reason the couple had problems," he said.

The pastor was adamant that the young woman should be assisted instead of focus being diverted to other issues.

'I couldn't leave daughter to suffer anymore'

The woman who is said to have rescued her step-daughter from her husband's alleged predatory ways, has said she felt guilty leaving the child after she made such startling allegations.

Disclosing that she was going through an ugly divorce with her husband, she stated how she had also been alleged to have sworn at her husband to such an extent that there was a peace binding order against her.

"I will admit that it has not been rosy, however, having lived apart from my husband for some time, my two chil-

dren kept on asking for their sister and I felt guilty and tried to get her to a place of safety," Rebecca Hleta-Magongo said.

She acknowledged that her assisting her daughter during a tumultuous divorce could be suspect but she felt it timely to get her daughter out of the situation she was in seeing as the whole family was turning against the child.

Reported

"Zandile reported the matter to the family and I noted that they shoved it aside as though it didn't matter. I would hear things being said by family mem-

bers and we suspected that she could be pregnant sometime last year and I don't know whether she terminated it because she then fell sick," she said.

She stated that Zandile had called her on Wednesday saying she feared the worst.

"Prior to this I asked her father to ensure that she gets counselling, even if we hid the fact that he was also involved so that the child can get help," she said.

In actual fact, Hleta-Magongo said she tried to engage her husband repeatedly but due to their fall out, there was nothing done.

Joy retires, Jabu takes over

BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

It is now official, Joy Maziya has left the building.

In this case, it is the Swaziland National Library Services building—the place where she was the director. Maziya, who divorced the prime minister last year in November, has now officially retired from the Civil Service.

Her deputy Jabu Hlophe serves as the incumbent.

A visit to the Mbabane Library on Friday revealed that Hlophe was well settled into the position she assumed at the beginning of the month.

"The director is at the headquarters," was the response from staff who revealed that her last day was on February 28.

Reiterating this, Ministry of Public Service Principal Secretary Evart Madlopha said according to his records, Maziya's last day in office was on Tuesday, 28 February after her application for early retirement was processed.

"All I know is that Maziya is no longer at work as she is no longer a civil servant," he said.

On the other hand, Information, Communications and Technology Minister Dumisani Ndlangamandla said he was aware there was a shift within the SNLS

and that Hlophe was holding fort on an acting basis.

"The director is yet to be identified and appointed," he said.

The finalisation of her retirement comes in the wake of prolonged 'perusal of documentation' which was confirmed by Madlopha last month when he was asked to provide details of her last day at work.

Having confirmed that the request for retirement was received by the ministry towards the end of the year, he said there were several documents to be approved prior to her wish being granted. On the other hand, unconfirmed reports stated how there was confusion concerning her commencement of service while quantifying her retirement package.

The retirement by Maziya has been seen as the closing of a chapter as her promotion to the position of director came at the height of her courtship with the Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini and her retirement came after her divorce. Immediately after the divorce was granted by the Chief Justice Bheki Maphalala, Maziya reportedly tendered her early retirement.

Hlophe is Swaziland Library Association President and has previously worked as Librarian at Gwamile VOCTIM Library.

MTN blocks suspected Wangiri fraudster, calls for alert

BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

The Seychelles number, which called several mobile users, has been blocked by Swazi MTN.

This was confirmed by Corporate Affairs Manager Mandla Lumphondvo yesterday.

He was responding to questions on whether the number, which called local users in February, had been identified in the wake of new fraud alerts issued by MTN SA on Friday evening.

According to a message sent by South African mobile company MTN Yello, MTN's short message service (SMS), customers were alerted to avoid returning missed calls from international numbers as there's a scam doing rounds called Wangiri Fraud. Lumphondvo stated they found that the number, which had been 'terrorising' locals, belonged to a syndicate which allegedly tried to access banking details.

He stated how attempts to return calls to the number were met with either an engaged tone or strange noises.

He said the local mobile company was keeping tabs on any other initiatives that fraudsters might come up with and take advantage of the service.

He said it was not as yet clear on how it worked but what was need-



Swazi MTN Corporate Affairs Manager Mandla Lumphondvo.

ed was for subscribers to be cautious and report anything strange that they might come across while using their cellular phones.

According to several scams alert websites, Wangiri is a phone fraud involves a computer dialing a large number of mobile phones at random. The numbers appear as missed calls on the recipients' phone. Believing a legitimate call was cut off, or simply curious, users are enticed to call back.

This type of scam is not new as it is said to have been around for over six years.

India's fertiliser helped farmers double yields

NEW DELHI, INDIA – Some local farmers were able to double their yields after using the lime and fertiliser obtained with the assistance of India.

This was disclosed by the Minister of Agriculture, M. Suresh Kumar, on Friday during a panel discussion on 'nurturing deep-rooted partnerships for total food security' at the 12th CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership held at the Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi.

"Some farmers who used to obtain two to four tons per hectare have now yielded six to eight tons thanks to the fertiliser obtained through the subsidy programme funded by the Indian Exim bank," he said.

The minister was stressing the need for more assistance from India in areas of research and development to transform our agriculture sector.

He said African farmers could obtain greater yields from less hectares using modern farming methods which India had acquired.

India has barely three per cent of world's arable land yet feeds 17 per cent of the world's population.

Also necessary, he said, was skills transfer which could be used in helping farmers add value to their produce before it leaves the farm gate.

The question posed to the panelists was 'can India outsource its agriculture production to Africa in a big way and what is the scope for joint research and development (R&D) in agriculture?'

The minister said there is a very wide scope for joint R&D for India and African countries, especially now that focus was on agro-processing or value addition.

"The challenge we have is that agro-processing is done at a secondary level and the farmers at primary level are not benefiting from this. We now need to maximise the benefit at the lower level. The Kellogg cornflakes story is very relevant to African farmers as a solution to their challenges," he said.

Minister Vilakati noted that Africa has an abundance of land but it was acidic and lacks water for irrigation as well as fertilisation and soil testing.

"The other area of possible assistance is improved mechanisation because in Europe, for instance, you have one tractor for 20 farmers, yet in Africa we have one tractor for 400 farmers. This means some farmer lose out on the rain season while waiting to plough," he said.

He also urged the Indian government to secure a market for agriculture goods from Africa as this was also a serious challenge facing local farmers.

SD CALLS FOR DUTY-FREE ACCESS TO INDIA

STORIES BY KING'S OFFICE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, INDIA – The Indian government has been urged to review the country eligibility criteria for free access to its market so that Swaziland could qualify.

Currently, countries classified as lower middle income are not eligible to benefit from the Duty Free and Quota Free (DFQF) trade facility offered to low income countries by one of the fastest growing economies of the world.

The call was made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Chief Mgwagwa Gamedze when speaking as a panelist at the 12th CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership on Friday.

The conference opening ceremony was graced by His Majesty the King and the President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee the previous day.

The discussion was themed; "Reinforcing India's Development Cooperation with Africa." It sought to find ways of how India could play a key role in Africa's economic development.

"While several African Lower Development

Countries are benefitting from India's duty free quota free access, Swaziland, despite its several socio-economic challenges is unable to benefit from it due to its classification as a lower middle-income country."

"The Government of India is urged to revisit the conditions governing country's accessibility so

that Swaziland and others like her can also benefit from the DFQF access," he said.

Motivating his submission, the minister said both Africa and India have a rich and common history which is now very vibrant, multi-layered and aimed at mutually beneficial economic development.

Money

He noted how annual trade between India and Africa had grown from US\$1 billion in 1995 to US\$ 75 billion in 2015, making India the third largest trading partner of Africa.

"This was made possible owing to the dismantling of trade barriers, both tariff and non-tariff, by Africa

and India. The private sector in both the regions has played a critical role through trade promotion.

"For further improvements, African countries have to facilitate, by removing bottlenecks such as bilateral investment treaties, access to capital and improving the business environment.

There is a need for greater engagement of the private sector in Africa and India," he stressed.

The minister said another vehicle for greater trade and cooperation was through utilising the Line of Credit (LOC) offered by the EXIM Bank of India.

He said the current challenges such as gap between commitments, and actual disbursements need to be tackled by the LOC.

The Exim Bank has extended a line of credit of over US\$57 million to Swaziland which has gone into agriculture development and purchase of tractors and ploughing equipment (US\$37.9m) and the construction of the Science and Technology Park (US\$20m).



The President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee and His Majesty King Mswati III at the Presidential palace before a luncheon hosted in honour of the King's visit to India on Friday. (All Pics: Len Mohale).

ABOUT THE CONCLAVE

The conclave is a gathering organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry which is more like our Federation of Swaziland Employers and Chamber of Commerce (FSE&CC), together with the Indian government focused on business and trade.

It is attended by delegates from all over

Africa and has been able to build a bridge between Indian and African businessmen and senior government officials.

Goods

Over the years a large number of MoUs have been signed at the Conclave and 2915 projects worth US\$327.12 billion have been discussed.

This year's Conclave sought to scale up bilateral trade flows by US\$100 billion and make India a key destination market for Africa manufactured goods.

According to CII a total of 473 project proposals for consideration have been submitted by 16 countries this year worth US\$69.62 billion.

SADC ministers fast-track Industrialisation Strategy Action Plan

BY MLONDI MPANZA

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) ministerial task force on regional integration is working around the clock to finalise the SADC Industrialisation Strategy Action Plan before the Heads of State meeting on Friday.

This was after a directive from the Ordinary Heads of State Summit last and the ministers yesterday met at the Royal Swazi Convention Centre for the 18th meeting of the ministerial task force on regional economic integration where this subject will be deliberated.

The ministers meeting follows that of senior government officials which began on Monday and ended on Friday where they also went through the action plan in readiness for the ministers meeting.

Speaking during the official opening yesterday, the Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini who was represented by the Minister for Finance, Martin Dlamini stated that the action plan was greatly anticipated by all the people in the SADC region and its approval will be equally received with great applause from all



Cabinet Ministers from the SADC Region posing for a group photo with the SADC Executive yesterday during the official opening of the Ministerial Task Force Meeting on Regional Integration. (Pic: Mlonzi Mpanza)

corners.

He said this was rightly so because the region's citizens were looking up to the ministers to create the necessary environment for enhanced income earning opportunities and improvement in their general standard of living in line with the vision of the SADC Heads of State and Government.

Of note, in 2015 during an extraordinary summit in Harare, Zimbabwe, heads of state and government adopted and approved the SADC

Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap from 2015 – 2063.

This strategy is pivotal in shaping the landscape of SADC and will go a long way towards developing the region, asserted the premier.

Breaking down the action plan, Dlamini said it will help in guiding the implementation of regional integration policies and strategies which are set out in the action plan.

"The action plan has clear timeframes and will focus on the next 15 years of the

strategy. I have been informed that it is anchored on three interdependent strategic pillars which are Economic and technological Transformation, Competitiveness and Deeper Regional Integration," he said.

Therefore, Dlamini pointed out that the ministerial task force had been given the responsibility to ensure that the draft action plan will leave the meeting in a state that will lead the region in the path laid out by the leaders.

Also, they are tasked with exploring all possible mechanism for resource mobilisation in order for effectively implementing the action plan.

In order for the ministers to recommend a clear action plan for adoption by the Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government, they have to carefully go through the three pillars, said the premier. He further emphasised that time was not on their side as the first phase of the Industrialisation is scheduled to end in 2020 hence the need to ensure that the implementation of the strategy takes place without further delay.

In particular, this is with reference to the prioritisation and proper sequenc-

ing of activities lined-up for the short term period up to 2020.

The PM further stated that there was interdependence between some of the activities of the strategy and those of the Infrastructure Development Master Plan to support trade facilitation.

With industrial development being a cross-sectoral issue, the ministers were once again reminded that about the need for high levels of coordination and collaboration between various agencies and government departments as well as private sector.

With reference to the latter, the Esibayeni Declaration will be a good starting point in cementing the collaboration between governments and the business community, in particular, the smooth flow of goods and services between member states which is a critical ingredient into the development of value chains, a key anchor in the region's industrialisation effort.

Meanwhile, amongst those present in the meeting representing the local government were Ministers Pastor Lindiwe Dlamini, Jabulile Mashwama, Phineas Magagula, Edgar Hillary and Mduduzi Dlamini who represented the Chairman of the Ministers Council, Prince Hlanganani.



His Majesty King Mswati III at one of the exhibition stalls during the conference

Local banks not keen on infrastructure projects?

NEW DELHI, INDIA – Could it be a case of the local banks being either too small or simply lacking the appetite to fund mega infrastructure projects in the country?

This question arises following a submission by Economic Planning and Development Minister Prince Hlangusemphi to the effect that local banks shy away from granting loans for long term infrastructure projects.

The minister was speaking as a panelist during a theme talk on 'fast-tracking Africa's infrastructure Development' at the 12th CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership on Friday.

The discussion sought to find ways to reverse Africa's infrastructure deficit which has been cited as the cause for an estimated two-three per cent reduction of the continent's GDP growth annually.

Speaking at the conference, the minister listed the lack of funding and technical capacities as major challenges to infrastructure development due to budgetary constraints and shallow financial markets.

"Furthermore, local banks are not

in a position to supply loans needed for long term infrastructure projects and investment. Besides boosting public-private partnership (PPPs), there is a need for tapping the alternative and innovative sources for funding the huge infrastructure needs of Africa through domestic and regional capital," he said.

Although he did not name any, banks in the country include FNB, NED-BANK, Swazi Bank, Building Society and Standard Bank.

Prince Hlangusemphi also noted that Africa could also benefit from engaging with Indian firms through technologies and expertise exchange for infrastructure development.

He identified possible areas for this as upgrading road networks, setting up the railway, the ICT sector given India's wide experience in this area and in areas of developing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Smart Cities.

The minister was optimistic though that despite the infrastructure deficit, Africa's development had changed from one of doom to one of hope and revival.

He mentioned Africa was now revis-

iting its policies and strategies to facilitate investment and infrastructure development. "For example, Swaziland has approved a 20 year free trade through the promotion of EPZs. This is an excellent incentive for Indian companies to invest in the kingdom," he said. He also highlighted that a 30 year strategy called Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PRIDA) has been developed by NEPAD and the African Development Bank, focusing on regional trans-boundary projects.

The prince said these initiatives should be able to address the low level on intra-Africa trade and trade with other regions due to inadequate infrastructure.

"For example, one has to fly to Europe first to fly from one African country to another and although Africa accounts to 12 per cent of the world population, it accounts for a mere one per cent of global GDP and around 2 per cent of world trade," he lamented.

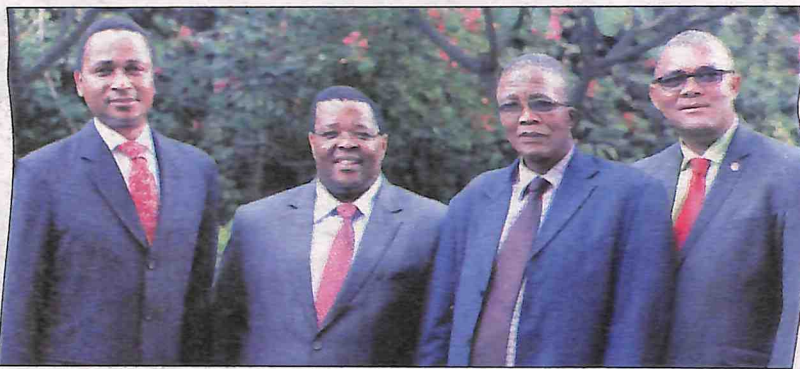
The minister said India knows Africa better and has shared similar colonial experience so it should take full advantage of the investment opportunities in Africa.



Agriculture Minister Moses Vilakati raises a point during a panel discussion on nurturing deep-rooted partnerships for total food security at the conference.



Minister of Economic Planning and Development Prince Hlangusemphi addressing delegates during a panel discussion on fast-tracking Africa's Infrastructure.



Mphiwa Dlamini, Mlondi Dlamini, Samson Hlatshwayo and Collen Lasco.

...Significant progress in finalising action plan

Meanwhile, the SADC Executive Secretary, Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax revealed that there has been significant progress made since the last ministerial task force meeting in July, 2016.

Dr. Lawrence Tax stated that member states had submitted comments on the draft action plan as per the directive and consultations were further made with the private sector to beef up the inputs received from member states.

"Senior officials met in November, 2016 to consolidate the comments, revise and finalise the draft action plan. The revised action plan was further circulated to member states in December, 2016 for final comments which have been duly incorporated in the draft in readiness for the minister's meeting," said the executive secretary.

She also mentioned that they were confident that the interactions between the secretariat, member states and the private sector had assisted in refining the action plan into a document that can be used as a guide to implement the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap.



The SADC executive having a discussion during the official opening.

It is also in this meeting that the draft plan was submitted to the ministers and Dr. Lawrence Tax pointed out that they

expected the ministers to adopt and recommend the costed action plan for approval by the Extraordinary Summit.

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WOMEN ACTIVISTS SLAM MP MJULUKO

...For statements he made in Parliament on Friday justifying violence against women.

STORIES BY MLONDI MPANZA

Women activists have condemned the statements made by Mtfongwaneni Member of Parliament, Mjulukko Dlamini, which were to the effect that women were wrong to disappear after men had spent on them. In fact, he was reported by the Swazi News yesterday to have attributed the high rate of domestic violence to women demanding air-time and drinks from men, only to later disappear when it was time to go to bed.

The legislator went on to assert that most men resorted to violence because women declined to sleep with them despite having spent a lot on them, a statement which has not been taken kindly by women activists, Doo Aphane and Colani Hlatshwayo of Women and Law.

Called by the Sunday Observer yesterday, Aphane expressed her shock at the cringing statement made by the MP who she wonders if he is honourable indeed if he still

...I didn't say that - MP Mjulukko

When sought for clarification on his sentiments, the Mtfongwaneni MP said his statements had been wrongly interpreted.

He said all he meant was that whilst men 'preached against' women abuse, but there was need to equally warn women against using men for financial gain.

"I did not say it was okay for men to beat women but was merely trying to explain that this issue was complex in that it needed to be addressed in two ways, that being both men and women," he said.

He made reference to a case where he said a man spent lots of money entertaining a woman with the hope

of gaining sexual pleasures but when the woman declined, it was in such cases that the man turned violent out of frustration.

In simpler terms, he said women should also not put themselves in situations which will endanger their lives such as this instance he had quoted.

He said whenever women engaged in a relationship with men; it should solely be because they were looking for marriage and no other reason that will make them vulnerable.

Mtfongwaneni Member of Parliament Mjulukko Dlamini.



has such a mindset towards women violence.

A fuming Aphane minced no words as she called for the MP to swallow his embarrassing statement as she further expressed shock that there was a person who still believed in women violence at this time and age.

"This MP doesn't belong in this community or better yet country," remarked Aphane, before making it known that there was no room for such people in the society.

She further wondered where the country was headed for if legisla-

tors still believed there was an excuse for every act of violence against women that takes place in the country. "Shame on the MP," exclaimed Aphane as she emphasised that there was no room for such people in the society.

Whilst Mjulukko emphasised on the need for women to be taught how to handle men and not 'chow their money and then leave,' Aphane reminded the legislator that sex trade remained illegal in Swaziland since his assertions implied that because a man has spent on a woman then she should

give her sexual pleasures in return.

For such, she bluntly called for the MP's arrest because he believes in sex trade, which the very same parliamentarians have prohibited in the country.

On the other hand, Colani Hlatshwayo of Women in Law said she was shocked to learn of the existence of such a legislator in the kingdom. She said the general expectation for MPs was that they would be on another level when addressing issues of women abuse, however, it was still a long way to go if a whole MP had the guts to

make this kind of statements.

Hlatshwayo said it was a problem if legislators perceived women as objects and not human beings and further went to the extent of trying to justify women abuse.

She said, "It is worrying to hear MPs say such at a critical time like this when there was a rise in women killings and abuse."

The national director added that this made her wonder if when the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Bill is eventually passed into law, it will protect women or will be more concentrated on the interests of the parliamentarians.

She concluded by asserting that it was high time women were voted into Parliament so they work on the passage of laws that will protect them against violence. "This is a sign that women should go to Parliament and it should be taken seriously because this is a very sensitive subject," she said.

Meanwhile, the assertion by MP Mjulukko was made during a debate in Parliament where MPs called for interventions regarding domestic violence and further called for a study to determine the causes of the many cases of violence in Swaziland.

On February 2, our sister publication the Swazi Observer daily, reported that there was an increase in cases of domestic violence and the Royal Swaziland Police (RSP) was alarmed.

This was after the release of a report by the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) which revealed that 34 cases of domestic violence had been reported in less than a month.

The most gruesome detail to the cases was that most of them resulted in deaths, with such attributed to low self-esteem.

Farm 482 cause for Macudvulwini, Velezizweni dispute

STORIES BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI

'Abasulute iminyango!' This was the ultimatum given to the 38 families of Macudvulwini this past week in a stern warning delivered by Acting Ludzidzini Governor, TV Mtetwa.

This directive means that the families much switch allegiance to Macudvulwini and not KaVelezizweni Chiefdom.

However, according to the acting chief of Macudvulwini Silulu, nothing had happened by yesterday afternoon. He explained that these families are not being evicted per se but urged to accept that the land they occupy (Farm 482) belongs to Macudvulwini and show this by changing their national identity documents and paying allegiance to this chiefdom.

The matter has been arbitrated at three levels. First it was at the Swazi National Courts by Chief Sibengwane. The matter was later adjudicated by the then Manzini RA Prince Masitsela and lastly at Ludzidzini by the Governor Timothy Velabo Mtsetfwa in 2013.

In all three levels, the judgment has remained the same but the faction is still unshaken.

This then resulted in the directive delivered by the Ludzidzini governor

Shaka Motsa, who also built his home on the farm, says he belongs to Macudvulwini Chiefdom and is terrorised and hated by some of those who say they pay allegiance to Velezizweni.



An aerial view of the chiefdoms involved in the dispute. (Pics: Zwelethu Dlamini)

who gave them 30 days to switch their allegiance. There were a total of 41 families who are said to have been involved in the matter with only three families taking the directive of the Ludzidzini governor in 2013.

The source of the current dispute is that the 38 families claim to have acquired the land through the *khonta* custom at Velezizweni and were

allocated land in the farm that is under Macudvulwini by the late chief of Velezizweni.

One of the farms that have brought the controversy is located next to the boundary of Velezizweni chiefdom. It is alleged that the late chief allocated some of these residents land in this farm assuming it was still under his chieftaincy. These families then acknowl-

edged the Velezizweni chief and never paid allegiance to the Macudvulwini chief.

This therefore led to the controversy as the Macudvulwini chief demanded that these people pay allegiance to him or vacate the land which was resisted by the families. This then led to the chief taking the matter to court, which ruled in his favour.

Velezizweni, Macudvulwini Emalangeneni never agreed on plot

When two elephants fight, the grass suffers so they say.

The dispute that seems to be between the subjects and the chiefdom is allegedly between the *Emalangeneni* of the two chiefdoms.

This was revealed by the acting chief of Macudvulwini Silulu Dlamini in a telephone interview.

Acting

According to the acting chief, they were always at loggerheads in all the levels of adjudication of this matter.

"Ndabazabantu asked the *Emalangeneni* to sort the matter between them but they failed to as each party argued it was the rightful owner of the land in question," he said.

The two chiefs are said to have then decided to take the matter further, each wanting to proof ownership of the land.

WE WANT TO HAVE A SAY IN OUR MATTERS - PARLY STAFF

BY MLONDI MPANZA

Parliament Service Staff have had enough of hearing about matters that pertain to them being discussed without their involvement.

This is one of the issues they raised in their five page letter to the Parliament Service Board (PSB) Chairman, Themba Msibi dated November, 17, 2016. However, the letter is yet to be responded to and no reasons have been forwarded to them for the 'silent treatment.'

"We are concerned that our issues are dealt with in public when we have not been engaged in any formal meeting to discuss them.

Some of these issues are raised by Members of Parliament in the chamber and debated as if the staff do not exist, and it equally causes concern to us to be a bone of contention but not recognised as matured individuals who can have a say and contribute to solutions challenging the institution," reads part of the letter. Also, the staff pointed out that they have on a number of occasions been flooded with information to the effect that some members of the board, on an individ-

ual basis, had access to the ministry of public service which governs their schemes of service, pending of the terms and conditions of service and they feel such is unfair as it encourages favouritism and unfair labour practice.

They are also concerned by the difference of opinion within their leadership which they claim adversely affected the manner in which they related to the superiors because, through experience, when the staff was seen instituting duties with one or the other, they were labelled as being in that individual's camp.

Created

This has since created fear and intimidation amongst the staff and in turn affects their productivity because they resorts to unprofessional measures.

Equally, it concerns the staff to get frequent and informal reports to the effect that Parliament's leadership allegedly deals with matters of the staff in their individual capacities when the Parliamentary Service Act is clear with regards to what should happen in such matters.

The staff said the Act provided that all matters are supposed to be dealt with by the Clerk to Parliament



Parliament Service Board (PSB) Chairman, Themba Msibi.

in consultation with the PSB, however there have been actions or, 'lack of thereof which have caused tension and division among staff, further jeopardising our employment relationship and this, in our view, is detrimental to our service delivery.'

In essence, the transition to a PSA created the reasonable expectations of better welfare of the Par-

liamentary service staff as it is known practice that when such processes are involved, the general welfare including but not limited to remuneration is improved.

It was anticipated this would have been done soon after the promulgation of the PSA; however, two years later it has not happened.

'Interference in Parliamentary terms and conditions'

The employees allege there is interference by the PSB in the drafting of the terms and conditions of the Parliamentary service without their contributions.

The argument is that working in a Parliamentary institution is unique from the mainstream civil service and requires a certain level of understanding and experience to conceptualise the needs and demands of a Parliamentary service employee.

Therefore, it is against this premise that they feel undermined, partic-

ularly in view of the allegations that, "there are certain elements within the board that are clandestinely involved in the drafting of the terms and conditions of the Parliamentary service without us.

Nothing

We believe there is nothing for us without us," states the employees.

Further, the staff is disgruntled over the fact there have been grievances that have not been attended to by the PSB over the years, although some have been attend-

ed to but their prioritisation is unknown to the staff.

In addition, the staff holds the belief that that institution should review the terms of service which are expected to be different from those of the civil service, however, 'it is our considered view that it is well within the authority of the board to start some processes towards the betterment of the working conditions and to normalise other unhealthy conditions which were on the ground, prior to the board to the passing the Act.'

They have also been asked to indicate their interest in remaining in the Service or be deployed to other ministries or departments in the civil service, which they did in writing but have not have received correspondences from the board, at least confirming receipt.

Regarding

Such an act has left the staff in the dark regarding the thoughts of the board in as far as the parliamentary service is concerned hence they request for the reaction of the PSB concerning the matter.

New posts still vacant, two years later

Despite interest being shown towards a number of newly created posts within the Parliamentary service, they still remain unoccupied.

Some of these posts have been said to be vacant for over two years now with no priority being given in filling them up by the necessary authorities.

What further concerns the staff regarding the posts is that the service is allegedly not even getting back to applicants for feedback, whilst the staff argue that they feel pressure to have them filled up due to some of them already having to perform duties in current positions and those of the vacant position without any compensation.

There are also departments which were left out in the request for the creation of posts and in the eyes of the staff, these departments should have also been given priority because they are critical in the institution.

In the same spirit, it is a considered view that the posts are not a holistic solution to all departments because they

There are also some departments which need to be reviewed with posts being created or upgraded with the spirit of prioritisation being at the centre of it all.

are only allegedly available in certain departments and not all. There are also some departments which need to be reviewed with posts being created or upgraded with the spirit of prioritisation being at the centre of it all.

Supporting departments who are allegedly lowly paid are alleged to be working under unhealthy conditions as they do not even have uniforms with the excuse that there are no funds for such being told to the staff contrary to the employment act and other legislations governing the welfare of any persons in the workplace, even Parliament.

Also, the staff request that their remuneration structure needs to be reviewed and put in line with current times.

BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

NOT ALL TRAVELLERS' PRINTS TAKEN AT BORDER

Despite the roll out of the biometric finger print system available at the Oshoek-Ngwenya Border gate, not all travellers are screened.

Noted on Thursday, there were only two scanners against the four customs counters on entry into the South African side of the border.

There were two Swazi Police officers in full uniform who stated that they were curious about how the box-like gadget worked.

Standing in front of it, the Swazi officers asked South African Customs officers who stated that it would best that they get the official version of how the gadget worked seeing as they were only equipped with operating it without knowing its intricacies.

While the two police officers stood next to the gadget, several travellers went to other stalls to be assisted and they were not required to provide any scans of their finger prints. When asked on who was required

to place their hands on the scanner, the customs officers stated that it was just random as those who found themselves

being serviced at counters where the gadget was situated would be required to place their hands on the scan. The biometric finger prints system was recently rolled out by South African ministry of home affairs at all their border gates.

In terms of process, the biomet-

rics, photo and fingerprints of a traveller will reportedly be captured in addition to the normal scanning

of the passport to record the movement on the enhanced Movement Control System.

According to information available at the beginning of the month, for the first registration, the scans will capture all 10 fingers. Subsequent

movements will require capturing of only one finger for verification

purposes.

In December 2015, South African Minister of Home Affairs Malusi Gigaba announced the piloting of the biometric fingerprints system. At that time the system was piloted at three South African Airports namely the OR Tambo International Airport, King Shaka International Airport and Cape Town International Airport.

Gigaba said the purpose of taking biometric data at ports of entry was to accurately identify people and determine whether they pose a risk to South Africa.

He said by using biometrics, South African immigration was helping to prevent the use of fraudulent documents, protecting visitors from theft and to stopping criminals and immigration violators from entering the country. He said the introduction of biometrics constituted a key priority in the Modernisation Programme of the Department.

Standing in front of it, the Swazi officers asked South African Customs officers who stated that it would best that they get the official version of how the gadget worked seeing as they were only equipped with operating it without knowing its intricacies.



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Her Majesty the Indlovukazi addressing Philani Maswati Charity Organisation members during their Annual General Meeting at Hlane Royal Residence yesterday. **RIGHT** - Public Service Pensions Fund donated over E100 000 to Philani. (Pics: Simon Shabangu)

HOME FOR THE ELDERLY TO BE LAUNCHED THIS YEAR

Her Majesty made the remarks when addressing members of the organisation at Hlane Royal Residence yesterday during their annual general meeting

STORIES BY SIMON SHABANGU

Philani Maswati Charity Organisation Patron, Her Majesty the Indlovukazi says the old age home currently, under construction at Dvokolwako, will be launched before the end of the year.

Her Majesty made the remarks when addressing members of the organisation at Hlane Royal Residence yesterday during their Annual General Meeting. Her Majesty said construction of the facility is at an advanced stage, adding that if all goes according to plan, they will launch the facility before close of the year.

She said this facility would help to accommodate destitute old people who have been abandoned in their homes for different reasons. She said the facility will make it easy to care for such old people as they would be located in one place.

Her Majesty said she has received numerous requests from old people to 'adopt' them

since they do not have anyone to care for them.

"I am always touched by such pleas from the elderly people because at the moment there is nowhere that I can accommodate them. I am happy to announce that this facility is bearing completion and if all goes according to plan, we will launch it before the close of the year. Such facilities are popular in a number of countries that I have visited and I am happy that we will also have such a facility in the country where we will be able to house the needy elderly people" she said. Her Majesty said elderly people are a very important part of the society without which many things can go wrong.

"Indlela ibutwa kulabasembili, it is for that reason that we take care of the elderly people because they are the source of information without which we will be lost," she said.

Her Majesty also thanked the many sponsors that have supported the organisation since its inception some 20 years ago.

She said the organisation has received support from a number of local and international sponsors who have made different contributions over the years. Meanwhile Philani Maswati's Chairman Lutfo Dlamini, in his report, said the organisation has done a lot of work in the closing year while indicating they have a number of projects in the pipeline.

He said one of the biggest fundraising event in their plans is an Airshow to be staged at the King Mswati III International Airport.

He said with the blessing of Their Majesties, they are planning to stage a first of its kind airshow to bring to the different sizes of aircraft's to showcase in the local skies.

He said if Her Majesty blesses this event, they will announce dates for the show and conclude talks with stakeholders for it.

"We are excited about this show and we think this will be the first of its kind to be seen in the kingdom," he said.



Royal Swaziland Police National Commissioner Isaac Magagula with members of Green Pastures Savings and Credit Cooperative presenting a E50 000 cheque to Her Majesty.



Philani Maswati Charity Organisation members presenting gifts to Her Majesty.

Philani raises over E160 000

At the same event, Philani Maswati raised a sum of E169 809 in donations from different companies and individuals.

The biggest donation of them all was from the Public Service Pensions Fund, which donated E109 809.18 towards a water project to supply the Dvokolwako old age home.

The project, according to Philani Maswati's report, is already underway. Another sizable donation of E50 000 came from Green Pastures and Credit

Savings Cooperative, a savings scheme for the police. It was represented by its executive board and the Royal Swaziland Police Service National Commissioner Isaac Magagula. Other donations of the day came from the Tsu Shi Foundation, which donated 2 000 packages of rice.

Minster Phineas Magagula donated E5 000 while his counterpart Owen Nxumalo made a donation of E3 000.

Senator Lungile Gama donated E 1000 together with Lutsango

from Malindza who also donated E2 000. TSC Executive Secretary Mduzuzi Nkambule also donated E1 000.

Macaleni Dlamini donated a cow to Philani while Hlane MP George Maseko and his counterpart from Mhlume Sifiso Magagula each donated a goat.

The ceremony was attended by a number of volunteers and sponsors.

There were also a number of new members who joined the organisation. It was a joyful day for the members as they were entertained with live performances from local groups.



Some of Lutsango members who attended the event.

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WAS BUDGET STALLING WORTH IT FOR MPs?

BY MLONDI MPANZA

Parliamentarians are well within their right to critique the national budget if it does not speak to the needs of the people.

This is the view of Emmanuel Ndlangamandla, the Executive Director of the Coordinating Assembly for Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO) when reacting to Members of Parliament's (MPs) act of rejecting the national budget of E21.8million when they were supposed to debate it over a week ago.

Ndlangamandla holds that at the present moment the national budget was controlled by the Executive yet it should be done through wide consultations in order to make sure it addresses issues for the people on the ground.

As long as there are no consultations with regards to the budget, the MPs have a right to jump around until the budget is done properly.

On February 1, 2017, MPs took turns in lambasting the budget tabled by the Minister of Finance, Martin Dlamini claiming that it did not speak to the needs of the populace in issues such as access to clean water, proper roads and increase of the elderly grant, to name a few.

They told the minister to redo the budget; however it eventually went through without any changes this past week after the intervention of the Prime Minister, Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini.

In hindsight, Ndlangamandla pointed out that Parliamentarians were also lobbied by the general public where they are told on how they think the budget should be and as the public's representatives in Parliament they have to forward their submissions as seen during the debates.

"They are reacting just as we expect

On February 1, 2017, MPs took turns in lambasting the budget tabled by the Minister of Finance, Martin Dlamini claiming that it did not speak to the needs of the populace in issues such as access to clean water, proper roads and increase of the elderly grant



Legislators listening to the Minister of Finance as he delivered the budget speech.

them to," he added as he further stated that ideally, there budget should have timelines where civilians were given an opportunity to have contribute towards the budget so that no one gets surprised or rather there are less concerns arising, as they would have been attended to prior to being tabled in Parliament.

He said as Parliamentarians, they had to influence issues that made them popular just as they did when campaigning where they promise to address the very same issues that concern the electorate.

The CANGO director noted that politics were just about that and

MPs should not be expected to do anything less than critiquing issues brought in front of them in Parliament, especially where people mattered.

Meanwhile, whilst Minister Dlamini had been expected to come back to Parliament within 48 hours with a revised budget, he did not as he only came back on Monday in the presence of the PM who put his foot down that the budget would not be changed since that would be politically wrong.

The matter was then referred to the Finance Sessional Committee and a task team from Cabinet that came back and reported that the

MPs concerns will be catered for by means of a supplementary budget.

Also, whilst at the peak of the debate, our sister publication, the Observer on Saturday reported that the acting Attorney General, Sifiso Khumalo clarified that Parliamentarians had no power to allocate resources, despite that it was within their mandate to reject the Appropriation Bill.

The power to allocate was said to solely lie with the minister of finance as per the constitution and he cannot be forced to allocate money to certain projects or ministries by anyone.

...It's time MPs start packing – Bongani Mamba

On another note, businessman Bongani Mamba begged to differ on the MPs act which he described as holding the nation at ransom.

He argued that the budget had been embraced by the general populace with its misgivings and dissenting opinions should have been referred to the relevant portfolio committees for further scrutiny and not stall or hold the country at ransom.

"Do they understand the effects this had on unpaid suppliers in just one day?" he wondered.

He made reference with the Rural Development Fund which he said was the only dairy cow they had access to 'con the electorate and squander' building materials, award tenders and control ex-MPs and possible competitors.

Ticking

As a matter of fact, he said the Parliamentarians were, "behaving like rabid animals as the cock crow for the next round of national elections is getting louder and the watch ticking faster than a heartbeat."

He said holding the Executive at ransom had to be a fruitless exercise and is not surprised their motion was thrown outside the window.

He added that they had literally failed this country as they had spent more sitting allowed times debating non progressive issues and it was about time they started packing and enjoyed the public's hard earned taxes.

"We need fresh ideas that are pro 2022 and not this bunch," he concluded.



Businessman Bongani Mamba.

That was irresponsible of MPs – Jabu Nxumalo

Jabulani Nxumalo minced no words as he made it clear that he personally feels Parliamentarians had acted irresponsibly by frustrating the national budget.

He said public office required that one acts responsibly and be sensitive to the people they serve, as well as protect the country's integrity.

The SEIWU and FESWATU board trustee called for the MPs to apply thinking whenever they decide on anything because their decisions had an impact on the whole country by virtue of being legislators.

He said, "MPs acted irresponsibly because they arrested the country's development and caused hardship to government machinery which could not function as there are services that government has to deliver to people and that needs the very same money they were

delaying." The long time unionist added that the Parliamentarians were taking the country into disarray and as much as they had a duty to oversee the Executive arm but that should be done with a sense of responsibility and not abused.

He however, stated that he was happy they had finally realised that they were playing dirty politics at the expense of the country and the people.

Care

Also, he said they should not suddenly pretend to care for the public and the elderly with the issue of the former dating back to the 80s which he said should have long been addressed and not now because they were running out of time.

For one, he said they should have not frustrated the budget and let it go through if they cared for the elderly in order to make sure they get paid on

time, however now that they had done this they had delayed a lot of government processes.

Now that it's around mid-March, he said they will now be working under pressure and make mistakes yet by this time the budget should have already been debated by the respective committees in readiness for the new financial year commencing next month.

Motion

In conclusion, he shared that he did not expect to see all the Parliamentarians that moved the motion in the next Parliament as they had de-campaigned themselves. He said he prayed they would take this as a lesson and not do the same thing with their upcoming budget next year.

"We need peace in the country and should not be enemies of the state which we should be defending," he said.

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HIGH DEMAND FOR ACCOMMODATION AROUND SIDVWASHINI

STORIES BY MLONDI MPANZA

The demand for accommodation around Sidvwashini and surrounding areas, continues to worsen up with the arrival of yet another educational institution in the Centre for International Technology (CIT) College. CIT came into the area year ago when it bought the former MVTel building as part of the recommendations by the Higher Education Act and adds to Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT), which has been in the area for close to five years now.

Both institutions have no accommodation facilities for their students and therefore solely depend on rented flats around areas such as Sidvwashini, SOS, Makholokholo, Sitibeni and even as far as Ngwenya.

Combined, the institutions have at least 2 000 students who have been running helter-skelter looking for accommodation in surrounding flats, whose rent ranges from E300 up to E1 000 at the very least.

The outgoing Limkokwing Student Representative Council President Baphatse Dhladhla, stated that the annulment of the accommodation was a huge blow to the students.

This is because the facility accommodated more than 200 students, who today find themselves stranded as to where they will be staying as the semester progresses.

"The situation has been worsened by the arrival of the CIT College which also has students who need accommodation as they attend lectures. There has been a huge increase in the competition to get affordable accommodation within Sidvwashini and surrounding areas," he said.

He hoped members of the public who



Limkokwing University of Creative Technology. Most students from the institutions around Sidvwashini stay in one room flats in areas such as Sidvwashini, Makholokholo and Sitibeni, to name a few. (Pics: Mloni Mpanza)

have houses around Sidvwashini will come to the students' rescue and accommodate them so they are protected from any dangers that may disturb them from acquiring the qualifications they desire.

Also interviewed on Wednesday after this publication reported a week ago that Limkokwing and Castle Hotel had cancelled an agreement to accommodate the students, they expressed their frustration at having to find accommodation after admission to the institution.

With the arrival of CIT, the students pointed out that things have gone from bad to worse as they now have to share the rented rooms in larger groups as means of cutting down on the expensive rent.

One student found outside her rented two room house, which she shares with a friend at Makholokholo, she stated that the rent was around E1 070 and each of them paid E535.

She said, although such arrangements came with security threats for them as

girls, but they had no choice since they could not commute to school since their homes were far.

Having been only around for less than a year, the first year students have already been robbed in the area after their house was broken into whilst they were away on break after the elapse of the first semester. Another said he shared a one room with two others where the rent was E500 and although sharing was difficult, it made things easier because they managed to save from the rent whilst also helping each other in counteracting the struggle to find accommodation in areas around.

Apart from the rent money, the students have to further fork out money for electricity and water, even though that varies with the arrangement or agreements per landlord.

In the absence of proper accommodation nearby, some students have gone to the extent of resorting to commuting from as far as Manzini and Matsapha,

...Limkokwing is better; they have allowance – CIT students

On the other hand, CIT students hold the view that Limkokwing students are better off than them because they have allowances.

Limkokwing students get allowances of E4 950 per semester, which is largely expected to aid them with regards to paying rent and getting anything that maybe of assistance in aiding their learning, amongst other things.

However, since CIT College students are not entitled to such they believe things are worse for them as they have to depend on their families as sources of income.

"Not that we complaining but the truth is it is not easy surviving from your parent's income because there are a lot of things that need money here in Mbabane

by virtue of being a city and to name a few these vary from rent, electricity, water and even expenses for buying learning education material," elaborated one student, who chose to comment on condition of anonymity.

Parents

The student, who was found walking around Sitibeni headed for Sidvwashini, said he only boarded a kombi after he had received money from parents and that was only once or twice in a month.

However, he said it was a bit safer around Mbabane as compared to Matsapha, further making an example that whenever they leave clothes outside and go to school, they come back to find them without having been stolen.



yet another area that has seen an influx of students in need of accommodation from institutions such as the University of Swaziland, Institute of Development Management (IDM) and Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration (SIMPA), to name a few.

Prior to the annulment of the agreement between Limkokwing and Castle Hotel, it had been seen

as a relief to the students to have such an arrangement as over 240 learners were accommodated at the hotel which had been turned into a student's facility.

This was more-so because they were charged around E40 per day, inclusive of two meals and their stay at the hotel, with a further transport arrangement being made, although at a separate fee.

...Students not registered for failure to pay E1 000

Students who have up to date failed to pay an extra E1 000 for staying at the Castle Hotel have been denied registration by Limkokwing University.

This was revealed by sources, who expressed their unhappiness at the university's decision not to register

the students. The registration began on Monday and ended on Friday.

They told this newspaper that the latest action by the university to deny students registration for the semester without paying the E1 000 was illegal and uncalled for.

"The issue of accommodation should

not hinder students from going to class because in this case, the additional amount was not well explained and agreed upon by the students themselves or with their parents and the university," they said.

In addition, they claimed that through such, the university was suppressing

the students because they were vulnerable and had nothing to hold onto and this was where the students needed the government, through the ministries of education and labour, together with their parents to intervene.

On the other hand, the sources acknowledged the fact that the accommodation at Castle was a breakthrough to the disastrous situation that the students of the university are

living under outside of campus as the facility provided for safety and appropriate environment for learning for the students.

Environment

Although it had its own hiccups, but it was an environment that was positive in welcoming improvements, with the students at times being instrumental in making efforts to improve the living conditions.



With the increasing demand for accommodation, members of the public have taken into building flats which they intend to lease out to students and the working class, within and around Sidvwashini.

...Landlords make a killing

Whilst all has been said and done with regards to the demand for accommodation around Sidvwashini, landlords seem to be benefitting the most from this.

This has seen residents of the area going on a mad rush to either build new flats or tune their houses into one room flats to give them up to the students for rent.

During a visit to Sidvwashini and Makholokholo, it was noted that there were a number of construction works in progress, with land-

● **The woman, who owns close to 10 flats, with rent around E500 monthly, said this was a worthy investment with the influx of students in the area.**

lords building new flats, supposedly to accommodate both students and the working class, which is also formed in part by former Limkokwing students who are now employed around the city.

An elderly woman, who preferred to comment on condition of

anonymity, said she had been living in Makholokholo for a long time and the demand for accommodation has never been so high as it was the case currently.

As a result, she had to sell her cattle and build one room flats which she rented out to students and the working class.

The woman, who owns close to 10 flats, with rent around E500 monthly, said this was a worthy investment with the influx of students in the area.

A day hardly goes by without anyone knocking at her doorstep asking if there was any vacant house, she said.

Hlane Recovering A Year After Elephants Relocated

BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

The removal of 17 elephants from Big Game Parks over a year ago has seen an improvement in the vegetation as it is not under pressure from large numbers anymore.

Big Game Parks Manager Nikki Jacobsz revealed this on Friday, which was around the first anniversary since 17 elephants were flown to the United States of America amidst outcry from international organisations which were against the removal of the animals from the wild to relative captivity.

The elephants were relocated to American zoos, namely Dallas Zoo, the Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kansas, and the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska.

"Since the removal of the elephants, the impact on vegetation has been substantially reduced to a lower rate than that of when the elephant were in the parks," Jacobsz said.

She stated that the removal allowed certain species of trees the time to recover due to less browsing pressure of the elephants, which is especially relevant in view of the recent drought the country experienced.

She highlighted that the removal was very beneficial to endangered rhino as they had more vegetation to browse from since the removal of the elephants.

With the biggest reason forwarded by the non profit organisation during the hullabaloo made prior to the relocation of the animals being the vast destruction of vegetation, the organisation has noted reduced destruction of trees which has resulted in much reduced destruction rate of the nesting sites of Tree Nesting Vultures and Marabou Storks.

Over and above the benefits to flora and fauna, the Hlane Royal National Park has been able to erect electrical fencing around its perimeter which serves to keep animals within the boundaries of the parks.

"We have also been able to improve security infrastructure for the game rangers, as well as conduct aerial surveys of the Lowveld parks," Jacobsz said. On the other hand, the Sedgwick



Nolwazi & Amahle at the Dallas Zoo.

County Zoo revealed how the elephants adapted to their new surroundings.

Responding to an emailed questionnaire, Public Relations and Marketing Manager Melissa Graham, responding on behalf of the elephant manger and deputy director, said the elephants were doing very well.

"Within the first week, all the elephants voluntarily walked onto the new scale. The elephants, while initially wary of their new surroundings, were relatively fearless and willing to explore their new home," Graham said.

She stated that the elephants were in less than ideal body condition when they arrived and, with the year having gone by, everyone was pleased with their weight gain and current body conditions. Having previously roamed the wild, the elephants were contained in a sprawling enclosure and were named. "Within a month of arrival, all elephants recognised their names. It was pretty amazing to hear the keepers call each elephant by name and see them turn and come running," she said.

The elephants which were taken to Sedgwick were introduced to Stephanie, the original resident elephant, for the first time to five of the juveniles on June 6, 2016 and she was said to have almost immediately, Stephanie behaved like a matriarch. She was very gentle and kind with the juveniles.

Grahams revealed that animal care staff observed continual positive direction in the social behaviours exhibited

by all of the elephants.

Grahams stated that from observation, the levels of play and social activities have continually increased. "The juveniles (younger elephants) are often seen play sparring. Even the adult female is now sparring with a few of the juveniles. They are social with almost everything they do. They eat, wallow, swim, and forage together," she said adding how they were always moving together as a herd.

She admitted that the elephants adapted much quicker than had been expected and that they were confident the elephants would live fulfilled lives in their new home.

In the same vein, Dallas Zoo Communications Manager Lydia Jennings availed a statement from vice president of animal operations and welfare Harrison Edell who said the elephants from Swaziland had merged well with their existing herd of 'Golden Girls.' "Their social bonding has exceeded our highest expectations, and it's been quite heart-warming to see them form such strong connections so quickly," Edell said. He stated how Mlilo's calf, Ajuba, was now ten months old.

The birth of Ajuba a few months after arrival was said to have been a surprise to zoo officials as they had not expected a birth seeing as Mlilo, the mother, had been kept in seclusion with sterilised bulls prior to leaving Swaziland.

Edell said the 10 month calf was strong and healthy.

Head teachers pulling their hair out

STORIES BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI

Head teachers are frustrated by the delay of the Free Primary Education (FPE) and the Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) grants.

The funds have not been released since the beginning of the year despite the fact that head teachers claim they have already submitted the necessary documents to the ministry of education.

This came out during the Swaziland Principals Association (SWAPA) annual general meeting held at Mfanyana Hall in Manzini. A majority of schools claimed not to have received the funds, complaining that this made running the school difficult. According to the annual report this delay hits mostly the primary schools hardest because they solely rely on the grants for their operations. It was also stated that attempts to find a solution to the delay in the release

of both Free Primary Education and the OVC grants proved futile. The difficulty in accessing the ministry has delayed finding a solution to this problem they said.

In an interview the Vice President of SWAPA Welcome Mhlanga said there are a number of excuses that the ministry brought forward each time they raise this issue. He said the ministry complained about late submission of registers by head teachers, which he said the ministry claims that the head teachers delay to submit the lists stating that those who sent it timeously received it as early as January 31. Another excuse was that of bank transfers for schools with a larger intake which was said to take longer to process compared to bank cheques which are given to school with fewer pupils. Mhlanga also said minor issues led to the treasury department returning the registers including misspelling of names of pupils.

SNAT accused of delaying resignation of head teachers

Head teachers have alleged that the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) frustrates members who defect to the Swaziland Principals Association (SWAPA).

The association has been accused of delaying the processing of resignations by head teachers who wish to join the principals association.

This was raised by Azaria Mdziniso who submitted that the law did not allow double membership as the change of membership, caused by the delay from the former association. Mdziniso wanted to know what the national Executive was doing regarding the issue members who were allegedly being denied their right to leave the former organisation to join SWAPA.

Responding to Mdziniso's question Sam Sacolo advised

head teachers to consider the wording of their resignation letters, stating that they needed to be firm and show that they meant what they said not to sound as if they were pleading. He said for him it worked as he was called as soon as his letter was received. The vice president's response was that teachers who wanted to join SWAPA should write a letter to whatever unions or association they wanted to leave and indicate the date they wanted to do so. He also advised them to attach their salary advices and then make copies that would be used as reference if there ever was need in future. He also highlighted that the industrial relations act of 2000 did not allow people to have double membership in unions hence he encouraged principals to adhere to it.

Swazi TV to start screening GBR programmes

BY MANQOBA MAKHUBU

Swazi TV will soon start screening Global Business Roundtable (GBR) global television programmes.

This follows signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the organisation and Swazi TV.

In the long term, according to GBR Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Swaziland Chapter Chairperson Hezekiel Mabuza, they are still mobilising resources to localise the programme content and feature local experts across different sectors of the economy and Christian fraternity. GBR's objectives are to develop members holistically, mainly focusing on areas of growth and development and spiritual development.

The short signing ceremony was held on Friday at Happy Valley Hotel in

Ezulwini.

It was attended by GBR Convenor Siphosile Mseleku, Swazi TV Chief Executive Officer Bongani Dlamini, GBR and Swazi TV executive members.

The partnership will commence with a 12 months trial before it can be further increased to a long term partnership. Mseleku said the scope of the programme will cover what they do daily across different sectors of society including business, trade and investment issues, policies and governance, science and technology, religion and family.

"We deal with topical issues that affect the society and touch on critical topics that are not easy to address including drugs, cancer, depression and investment," he said. Mseleku noted they were also planning to host a global weekly show which would have panellists from different countries.

"What we are bringing to Swaziland is exposure to a faction of global experts on all topics. We are bringing the world to Swaziland and helping people stand what they wouldn't have under without such exposure," he said.

He stated they were excited to partner with Swazi TV and believe that the programme would empower, impact and transform the lives of Swazis as it has done in other nations.

Impact

"The testimonies from across the globe have been humbling and we hope that the same impact will be experienced in Swaziland," he said.

Mseleku revealed their target was to reach out to at least 20 newscasters before the end of 2017. Currently, the organisation has programmes on TV channels such as the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) which has an estimat-

ed viewership of over 300 million people and Redemption Television Ministry (RTM) which has about 20 million viewers around Africa. The organisation also has a fund called the Global Fund for Jesus (GFFJ). Mseleku said the aim of the GFFJ was to do what Jesus would have done if he was still present. It focuses on education, food security and job creation.

"We focus on all things that will bring dignity for God's people," he said. Swaziland's GFFJ Ambassador James Mabundza said their aim was to usher every person to abundance of life both spiritually and economically.

Swazi TV Chief Executive Officer Bongani Dlamini said GBR was one of the organisations they had been eagerly looking forward to partner with.

"We are a Christian nation, therefore, we really appreciate partnering with a global Christian based organisation that also presents the word of God," he said.

Dlamini said the partnership came at a right time as television has changed

from analogue to digital.

"Going forward, we will need a lot of partnerships and we hope that one day we will open a channel with you," said Dlamini. He said the TV station was eligible to open up to eight channels, but they were considering four for the short term which are Christian, commercial, education and sports channels.

He also warned the organisation against abuse of media to push personal interests. "We accept you with open arms and believe that there will be no hidden agendas," he said. He also stressed that the programme should not strip the country's citizens of their cultural pride, but rather reinforce their cultural identity. "We are proud of who we are and we will reach the gates of heaven bearing our true identity," he said.

GBR has a presence in almost 70 nations with thousands of chapters around the globe. In its vision 2020 the organisation targets a presence of 200 nations. "We believe that we will open a Parliament of multi-nations," said Mseleku.

FRESHERS POORLY ORGANISED -



The queen Tema flanked by her Princess Dlamini Sinethemba and Lethu Msibi during the crowning.

STORIES BY AYANDA DLAMINI

Even though she came out victorious as Mbabane's Freshest, Tema Bhembe pointed out that the event was poorly organised and she will host something much better next year.

She said this in an interview with this newspaper after she had been announced the University of Swaziland's Miss Freshers, Mbabane Campus, together with Dominic Tembe, who was crowned Mr. Freshers, both for the year 2017.

"I will make next year's Freshers better than this. I must say this one was poorly organised," she said.

The confident queen showed signs of bragging the title from the beginning of the event as she walked down the ramp and she confirmed that indeed her aura and confidence won her the title.

The duo were crowned King and Queen during the Freshers Ball held at the Kwaluseni Campus on Friday night where students could not hold themselves in sheer excitement when the judges made the announcement that Tembe and Bhembe were the winners.

This was because the two winners had been seen as the crowd's favourite from the onset as they were also crowned the Best Dressed Couple.



Dominic Tembe and Tema Bhembe were crowned Mr and Miss Freshers Mbabane Campus 2017 on Friday night at Kwaluseni. (Pics: Ayanda Dlamini)

"I knew this was mine, and I'm very excited and proud of myself," said Tema, as she vowed to host a better pageant

next year.

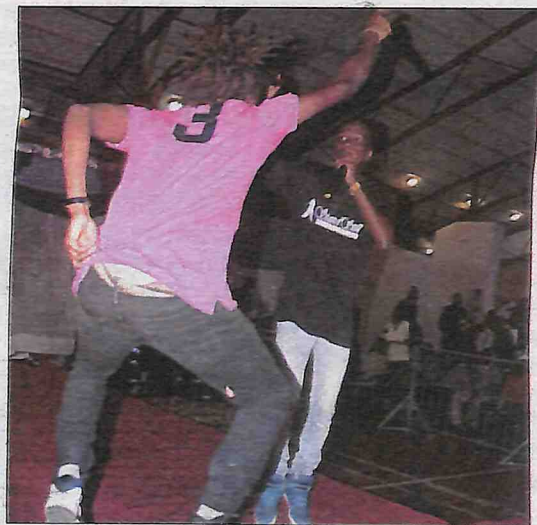
On the other hand, Tembe was speechless and could not believe himself, "Wow,



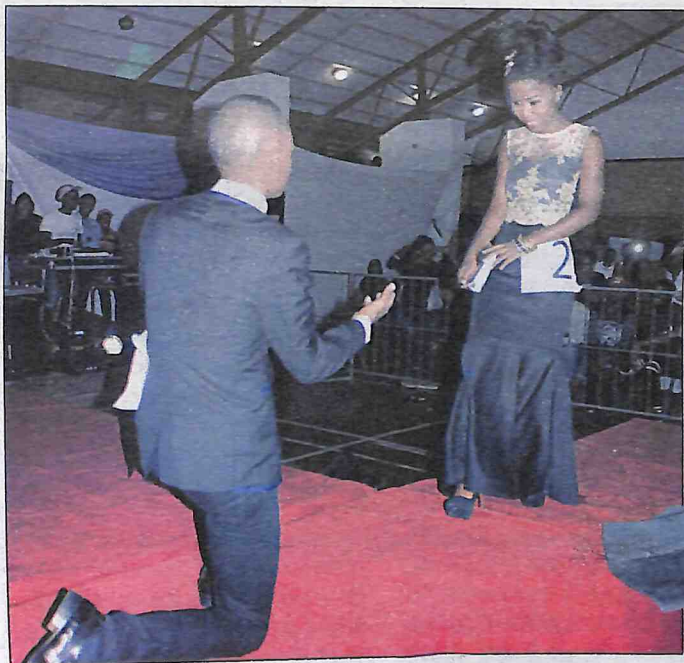
The queen on the ramp before being crowned.



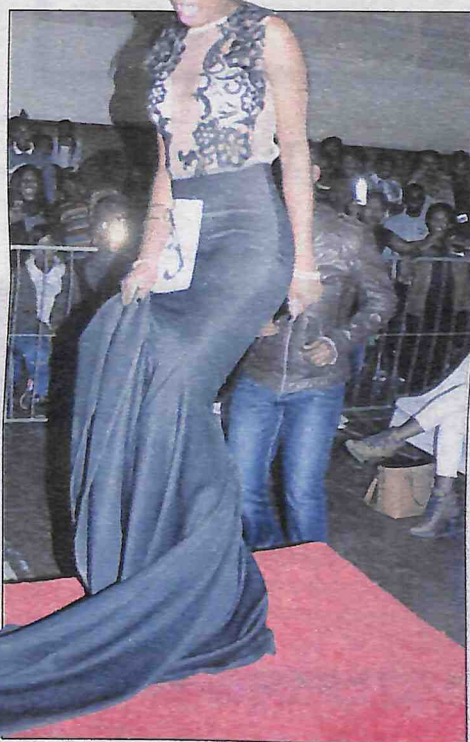
Miss Cultural Heritage 2017 Sindiswa Dlamini could not miss the pageant.



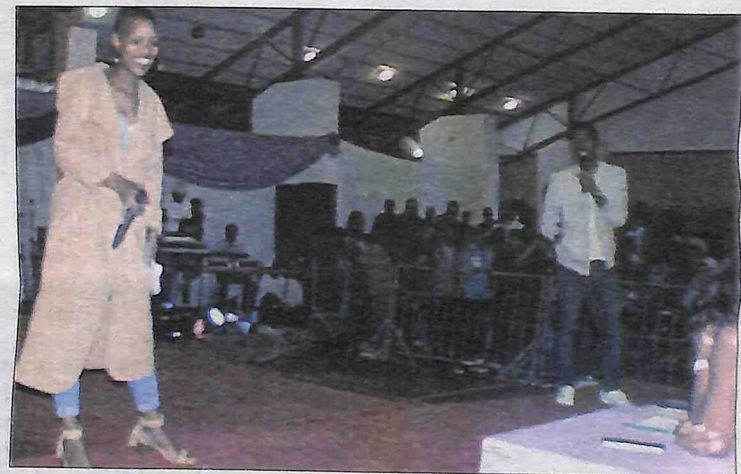
Hip hop artist Ncwiki thrilling the students with his performance.



Chirowa Siphesihle being proposed to by her partner Wandile Ziyane on the ramp.



Tenzo Dlamini showing off her dance moves as she looked refreshed. She was one of the crowd's favourites.



The Programme Directors Lungelo Nkambule and Mdura entertaining the audience.

MCs the best

The Programme Directors Lungelo Nkambule and comedian Mdura were lit as they entertained the students with their comments and the way they introduced the contestants.

"If the SRC team would always bring the two in every pageant, I

would definitely attend because they are perfect duet," said one of the students Bongiwe Dlamini.

The duet made sure the programme goes smoothly with no glitches and were able to control students who were rowdy with the help of the HM Security.

CROWNED QUEEN



(L-R) The judges former Miss Luyengo Freshers Lindokuhle Zikalala, model Calvin and Miss Swaziland Linda Hutchinson.

I don't know what to say and I can't explain the feeling," he said.

"I'm going to be the best ambassador ever as I will promote karate in all the campuses," he added.

Pageant

Meanwhile, the beauty pageant was well attended by students from all three campuses Mbabane, Kwaluseni and Luyengo. The event started late at

11:45pm whereas the initial time was supposed to be 8:30 pm.

The judges arrived at 11pm and the programme directors Lungelo Nkambule and Mduduzi 'Mdura' Dlamini took over the stage at 12am and were able to rush through the programme.

They introduced the judges Miss Swaziland Linda Hutchinson, model Calvin and former Miss Luyengo Freshers

Lindokuhle Zikalala. The contestants came prepared for the pageant as they were all looking all sort of fine and fresh.

The ladies went all out as their face-beats were on point, contour all the way. The beauty pageant was graced by performances from Ncwiki, The Music, PH3, and Sheppard Brothers. Master P and DJ Mbo thrilled the attendees with their sets after the crowning ceremony.



Sanele Mnguni suited up.



The king of the night Dominic being congratulated by his Princes Mdaka Thabiso and Neliswa Mthombo.



The students thrilled by Master P's set.



Nontsikelelo Malinga fell off the ramp for the second time as co-host Lungelo and Banele came to her rescue.

Stilettos spoil contestant's night

The night was no more fun for contestant 14; Nontsikelelo Malinga as she fell off the ramp twice, despite her pretty face and gorgeous outfit.

On the first parade, she could not manage her blue stilettos as she fell off the ramp but was able to stay the course as she did not give up but tried to

change her runway walk.

On the second parade, she tried and flashed a beautiful smile but her shoes were at it again as she fell off the ramp once more.

This time around, she could not take it anymore as she was helped by the organisers and programme directors to take off her shoes.



Tenzo Dlamini was one of the crowd's favourites but she could not make it to the top five.



Tiyandza Mavuso looked gorgeous in one of Boity's inspired outfit.

Botswana not coming for Intervarsity Games

This year's BOLESWA Intervarsity Games will not be the same as Botswana University will not attend.

This is according to the students who expressed disappointment whilst discussing the upcoming games.

"Botswana University students were

on a boycott of classes a few weeks ago so they are back in class and they cannot afford to lose a week of learning since they are behind," said



Areas in and around Mbabane, Matsapha and Manzini were the most affected by the power outage,

Electricity black out anguish:

'We want compensation!'

BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI

Consumers want compensation for the loss of perishable foods, as a number of households remained without electricity following the storm that occurred last week, resulting in the black-out.

Areas in and around Mbabane, Matsapha and Manzini were the most affected by the power outage.

"I don't know what I will give to the children for the remainder of the month since the meat became stale," screamed one consumer. "We have reported several times and I even went there personally but they never came to fix the problem since last week. These people don't care," Sindi Gwebu, a tenant at Kwaluseni, complained.

University students, who reside off campus, also became victims of the power outage. Some residents in Matsapha also complained that the attempt to attend to the faults have left the situation even worse off.

On the other hand, Swaziland Electricity Company (SEC) Corporate Communications Manager Sifiso Dhlamini, responding to a questionnaire sent by this publication, said the company was working around the clock to normalise

the situation.

He promised that power would have been restored in a significant number of households by the time of this story being published.

"It is not like we are not doing anything. It is true that there are people who have been without electricity since Friday. We are working very hard to normalise the situation. We are on the ground day and night," he said.

The communications manager stated that SEC endeavours to keep its infrastructure in good condition but occasionally some equipment do fail in service. In the case of lightning, severe storms, theft and vandalism, SEC has very minimal control.

Dhlamini pleaded with the affected people to be patient while the problem was being solved.

He said priority was given to areas that have a lot of people affected compared to isolated cases where only an individual was left in the dark.

He also advised that complaints on compensations could be directed to the branch superintendent who will address them. According to Dhlamini, the number of faults received after the storm shot up to close to 2 000 and since they started

working on the problem on Saturday, electricity has been restored in many households. He said fewer areas have yet to be attended to and explained that not everyone can be assisted at the same time.

He said the company's expensive cables and transformers that were damaged were being replaced.

He explained that their equipment is susceptible to damage in bad weather conditions because the country has not yet reached the level where cables are lined underground.

When asked what consumers can do to mitigate the outages, Dhlamini said consumers should avoid overloading their approved supply, that is, only SEC tested households should have electricity and no other houses should be electrified illegally or through extension cables, etc.

"Fruit trees and any other trees should not be planted under electricity lines, where there are trees under electricity lines these should be trimmed before they can reach or touch conductors. Where trees are already touching conductors, they can only be cut or trimmed after reporting to the SEC 24-hour Call Centre and having SEC personnel isolating the supply before any tree cutting is done to avoid electrocution, he added.

MINI-SIBAYA AT

BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI

Residents of from Ekuphumleni and Ekuthuleni chiefdoms under Sigwe Inkhundla put the tinkhundla system to good effect last weekend when they had a feedback meeting with their representative in Parliament.

Raising their concerns and taking the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the wellbeing of their inkhundla, and making good use of the presence of their MP David Ngcamphalala, this platform took the form of the 'people's parliament', known as Sibaya.

Ngcamphalala doubles as Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs, and he used this platform as a feedback session; just as the system should work.

Although noting progress in the electrification project, a member of the community, Dumsani Khumalo from Ekuphumleni implored the MP to work hard on the rehabilitation of the roads, adding that Cyclone Dineo had left a devastating trail in the constituency, leading to pupils and teachers not being able to attend schools.

"We appreciate the mobile money grant we have been receiving from the Swaziland Red Cross; it has gone a long way but poverty has not ended hence we request them to continue assisting us," he said.

If the roads cannot be tarred, Khumalo suggested that government could use crush stones instead.

"Another issue, which is a huge problem, is the lack of water, there is no clean water and hunger still persists. We had tried ploughing beans only a few germinated due to the scorching sun that dried up even big rivers," he added.

Khumalo also requested the ministry of natural resources to provide them with clean water for their health and sanitation.

"We have disabled and elderly people who are needy in the

● Raising their concerns and taking the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the wellbeing of their inkhundla, and making good use of the presence of their MP David Ngcamphalala, this platform took the form of the 'people's parliament'



Madoda Simelane said government should scrap Vat and Graded Tax while making his submissions at Ekuphumleni Umphakatsi. RIGHT - Make Lukhele said they appreciated the progress that has been made in developing the area and hoped their remaining needs will be addressed.

area that need assistance as well as the unemployed youth. We request a youth centre that will equip the youth with skills so they can be able to earn a living," he said.

Lastly, Khumalo stated that this could be a place where they can have access to the internet and get educated on life skills and career guidance as well as health matters so they cannot end up indulging in drug abuse.

Hopeful

Meanwhile, MP Ngcamphalala said he was hopeful that people with disability would soon be getting their grants from government.

This comes after the Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Paul Dlamini visited the area to assess the situation.

The MP has been working hard to have the concerns of the constituency addressed. On the issue of shortage of water, for instance, he said he had invited experts to assess the situation and come up with an estimated cost of the project that would ensure the com-

munity had clean water. He brought representatives of the European Union and the Swaziland Water Services Corporation Managing Director Peter Bhembe and his team of experts. According to him, the assessment of the estimated cost was placed at E15 million, which he said was needed to ensure that the constituency had clean water. He said the only challenge was where to get these funds.

On another note, the minister has lamented that the youth fail to show up during community meetings, which makes it hard to solicit their views and address their issues.

He said it is better that the youth affairs was under his ministry and encouraged this group of citizens to go to the constituencies and present their business plans.

Ngcamphalala said it was up to the youth to find time and attend these meetings to hear about the Youth Development Fund as his ministry has been allocated E10 million towards

NatCom apologises to junior officers

STORIES BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

The Royal Swaziland Police Service (RSP) National Commissioner Isaac Magagula apologised to officers affected by the electricity supply disconnection this past week.

According to Chief Police Information and Communications Officer (CPICO) Superintendent Khulani Mamba, the apology was extended to officers by a delegation which addressed them, following the nearly three-day electricity black out, which started on Monday and ended on Wednesday.

Responding to questions on what was being done in order to avoid an occurrence which resulted in the service defaulting on its electricity bills,

Mamba said the delegation went to the officers to not only apologise but also get ideas from them on how best to avoid such from happening again.

"Over and above the delegation going to meet with the officers at their work station, there was a meeting at the headquarters where the issues faced by police officers were delved into," he said, further assuring that something was done as the national commissioner was not sitting on his laurels.

Mamba said he was shocked that the officers, despite the apology and attempts to rectify the situation, had seen it fit to go to the media and complain about their situation.

"Electricity was restored on Wednesday

and even though I cannot promise this will not happen again, there are efforts being made to ensure that the officers do not get affected by such power cuts," he said.

On the other hand, officers who fell victim to the disconnection said they had the most gruelling week after being without electricity for 51 hours.

"We had no control over the situation as we cannot even go and pay in the event we had money as there was no way we could pay the bill," a police officer said.

He revealed how his food, which he bought to last him the month, all got spoilt after electricity got switched off by the Swaziland Electricity Company following overdue bills.



National Commissioner of Police Isaac Magagula.

The flats affected were those which do not have prepaid meters as SEC disconnected supply, following non-payment for several months.

Even though prepaid meters were

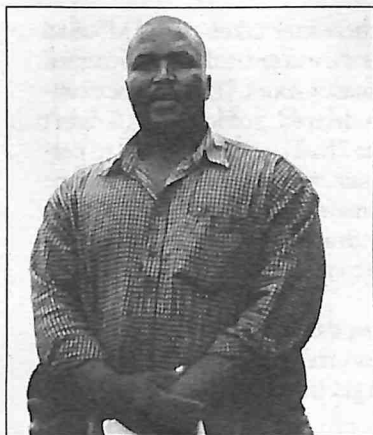
installed in several flats as of 2014, some remain post-paid.

"There is nothing as annoying as feeling helpless in such a situation," he said.

SIGWE INKHUNDLA



The community rejoicing upon learning that women will receive industrial sewing machines worth E80 000.



Sigwe Indvuna Yenkhundla Sibongalokukhona Sikhondze responding to a question posed by one of the community members. CENTRE - Bafana Ginindza making his submissions. RIGHT - Dumsane Khumalo who said they were grateful for the success of electricity schemes but more had to be done within the community of Ekuphumleni. (Pics: Zwelethu Dlamini)

youth empowerment.

The minister was also asked why the area was not a hive of industrialisation, as there were no firms operating in the community.

Make Lukhele stated having firms within the area would help reduce unemployment as well as poverty as their children could have job opportunities.

The constituency Headman Sibongalokukhona Sikhondze, responding to Lukhele's question, said the challenge was that firms were not willing to be located where they would not get a title deed. He explained that this was not possible since their constituency was on Swazi Nation Land.

He also stated the firms needed places with tarred roads so that production and distribution could not be halted due to trucks getting stuck or not accessing the firms in bad weather conditions.

Platform

Meanwhile, this was also the scene at Ekuthuleni chieftdom where the platform for emanyeva (submissions) was also availed.

Bafana Ginindza thanked Ngcamphalala for having ensured that the women in the area had sewing machines which were now their source of income.

He then requested the MP to also help the men with equipment that

would be used in income generating projects.

Ginindza also requested shelter and fencing for their newly established Umphakatsi.

Playground

Madoda Simelane said they did not have a playground that can be used to gather the youth to stop them from drinking marula and engaging in drug and substance abuse. He said the playground would also assist the youth to lead healthy lifestyles and keep them occupied.

Furthermore he was of the idea that playing soccer or other sporting activity could curb crime and other immoral acts that could result in the youth get-



A section of the participants paying attention to details at the newly-established Ekuthuleni Umphakatsi.



The women at Enyatsini chieftdom paying attention to the submissions.

ting HIV/AIDS.

"Another issue is that of unemployment as we only get temporal jobs from the firms.

The tax is very high, for instance, my gross salary is E2 000 but after tax and other deductions, I end up with a net of E1 200," he said.

Taxes

He also requested the MP to advocate for the scraping of direct taxes saying the graded tax and the value added tax (VAT) should be scrapped as it makes goods expensive. He also requested a youth training and vocational skills centre.

Make LaMsweli from Empakeni thanked the MP for his support in ensuring they have means of earning a living. "We are grateful that we now have sewing machines and material as we are now able to design our clothes and for our families.

"We also have a bigger dream as we want to supply schools around the area with uniforms but our machines are not equipped for that so we now request industrial machines.

"We also request assistance as we would like to raise indigenous chick-

ens," she said.

In his response to the men's request for equipment for starting an income generating project, Ngcamphalala said some men approached him and he managed to get them 200 bags of cement to start a block yard but they never showed up to pick them up to date.

He said one of them asked him if he was going to find them buyers of the blocks if they started the block yard.

Addressed

On the issue of unemployment, he said this was a national issue that needed to be addressed as reports say the country had poverty above 62 per cent.

He stated people should come up with ideas on what they can do with the Youth Fund and the Regional Development Fund as the budget has now been presented.

On the issue of a playground and roads, he stated they were also a national challenge as even in urban areas people complained about pot holes.

He stated the country did not have enough money to clear all the land for every community as at times there were complaints of shortage of petrol.

He revealed how those who were lucky were able to request other colleagues to intervene and keep food in their fridges.

"With the cool temperatures on Monday, I actually prayed that the weather remained cool until electricity could be restored to no avail," he said.

"I bought ice and put it in the fridge, partly in order to reduce the heat as you know that a switched off fridge heats up quickly, to no avail," he said.

Quantifying his loss, he said he lost over E500 worth of food during the period.

"Have you ever seen mouldy eggs? I had to throw out a whole tray as the eggs had grey spots," the officer said.

He resorted to braaing most of his meat in order for it not to go to waste. "My braai stand came in handy but the novelty of eating barbecued meat ran out very quickly as I had to eat a month's supply on Wednesday morning after realising it would be spoiled," he said.

With three officers per two bedroom house, Royal Swaziland Police Service officers are calling for meters to be installed in their rooms.

This request was made by police officers, following a 51-hour blackout affected by electricity supply disconnection due to the service's failure to pay its overdue bill to the Swaziland Electricity Company (SEC).

Even though the blackout affected officers living in flats where electricity is post-paid, it has seemingly brought about several complaints as those who have prepaid meters stated how they were not better off.

"We share a three bedroom flat and get * & * & * units to use collec-

... 'Install meters in our 'rooms'

tively for the whole month. In the event the units run out before the month is over or we find that the officers who have to buy the units have not done so, we then have to fork out our own money and pay," an officer said.

He revealed that this was unfair as their electricity use was not the same.

"I live alone and am hardly in the flat as I prefer going home during my off-days whereas the other officers have their families in the flat all the time.

"They cook about two times a day, boil a lot of water for bathing and the children are always watching television whereas I hardly

cook," he said, adding how when electricity ran out, they then had to pay an equal amount of money.

"It is unfair on some of us," he said, adding how they wanted their own meters in their rooms as this would reduce squabbles.

"One day we will come to blows over the use of electricity because we are not the same, some people clearly don't care about conserving electricity!"

He said the only reason they lived under such conditions was that rental property in Mbabane was very expensive.

"Once you decide to leave the accommodation provided, you have to really dig deep whereas the

housing allowance you get does not even get you a decent bedsitter," he said.

Responding to these concerns, Chief Police Information and Communications Officer Superintendent Khulani Mamba said they were still trying to find permanent solutions to these.

He said the problem was synonymous with those who had their supply subsidised by government. "Senior officers have to pay their electricity bill in full as they are not subsidised," he said.

When asked to explain as to which ranks paid their own bills, Mamba said he was not privy to that, save to say those who did not share their residencies paid for their own consumption.

Celebrating working women of substance

KNOCKED DOWN REPEATEDLY TO RISE HIGHER

BY THEMBEKA DLAMINI

It took two accidents and several failures to hone Gogo Nde's resilience and astute character which prepared her for her ultimate occupation, looking after children.

Born in 1954 in Mahlanya, Tsabile Victoria Mndzebele-Simelane, affectionately known as Gogo Nde, has over the years groomed hundreds of youth to conquer life's challenges from her humble home in Zenzile situated between Mtsambama and Mfishane under KoNtshingila Chieftdom.

"Initially, I wanted to be a nurse because of my love for looking after people," Simelane said during an interview, which was held during International Women's Day this past Wednesday. However, it would seem as though fate had other experiences in store for her before she could graduate to her destiny.

With 17 orphaned and vulnerable children, currently under her care, Gogo Nde, by extension, also takes care of over 220 children who live with their own families but due to different situations, look to her for food, medical attention, clothing and other basic needs.

She revealed how she was proud to note how most of her children had overcome their unfortunate situations and were making some-



Seated is Gogo Nde with Dennis Little from Texas who assist about 25 children under her care through Pasture Valley. He comes once every year to spend Christmas lunch with over 400 children he sponsors.

thing of themselves.

"One of our children is currently in Sri Lanka completing, others are based locally and are doing well in their tertiary studies," she said, adding how some had completed.

She explained how she started looking after children after some of her family members passed on. Noting the need in her husband's family as well, she said she then opened her home for those who had problems or were orphaned to see them succeed.

Declining to have accolades heaped on her, Simelane said she would not have been able to look after any of the children effectively if it was not for the assistance she receives regularly from different organisations and individuals.

Assists

"The Taiwan Fund for Children and Families assists on a regular basis and gives us hope that the children will be taken care of," she said.

Swaziland Posts and

Telecommunications Corporation (SPTC), Swaziland Royal Insurance Corporation, Philani Maswati, Amitofo, Seed of Hope, Mamelodi Sundowns supporters and other Good Samaritans have assisted her over the years.

Stating how taking care of children was a dream come true for her, she recounted her background and told of how she overcame obstacles, which were littered on her path to realise her dream of taking care of others.

"My father, a second World War veteran, did not believe in educating a girl-child as he said it was an unworthy investment," she said.

It was for this reason that her mother packed her up and sent her to Mbabane to her grandfather's brother who ensured she was enrolled at Mater Delarosa Primary School for Grade One.

Having been saved from the prospects of not getting an education, she was run over by a car while going past the present-day deputy prime minister's offices while on her way to school.

This accident put on hold her aspirations as she had to go back to Mahlanya, her parental home to get better.

Having been fated to succeed despite hurdles, her father relented and permitted her to attend school after her injuries healed and

she attended St Mary's School until she completed her primary education.

With the resolve that she should be a nurse, she went to Mbuluzi High School where everything went smoothly until a few weeks before she was supposed to sit for her Junior Certificate examination.

"It started when I lost my Mathematics book and when it resurfaced, I started having episodes of hysteria which were unexplainable," she said explaining that during the attacks, she would not see anything. Seeing that her attacks became regular, the school requested that she returns home to enable her parents to take care of her sickness.

"I returned just before the examinations and I was well until we were supposed to start," she said.

She was thereafter taken to the Mbuluzi Clinic where she was sedated and she returned to the examination room. "That day, the examination was delayed. Suffice to say, I didn't do as well as I had been determined to perform," she said, further revealing how none of her classmates fared any better, "No one came out with a First Class that year as most of us got Second Class passes while few got Thirds."

With her aspirations to be a nurse still burning in her heart, she tried to go to King Edwards Hospital to get training to be a nurse to no avail.

"Each time we talked about furthering my education to become a nurse, I would have an episode and I then had to forget about this," she said, adding how she worked at Swaziland Fruit Cannery as a supervisor while trying to apply.

It was from there that she joined Mbukwane Farmer's Cooperative, which facilitated her enrolling at Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT) where she got her first qualification, enabling her to be a secretary and book keeper.

After her stint at Mbukwane, she was employed as store lady at Swazi National High School where she facilitated the issuance of books.

She was to thereafter enrol at the Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration (SIPMA) where she did her Accountant Induction Course which she said she passed very well.

"I got disappointed thereafter as I was not

Unemployed woman living with 11 children, looking for their relatives

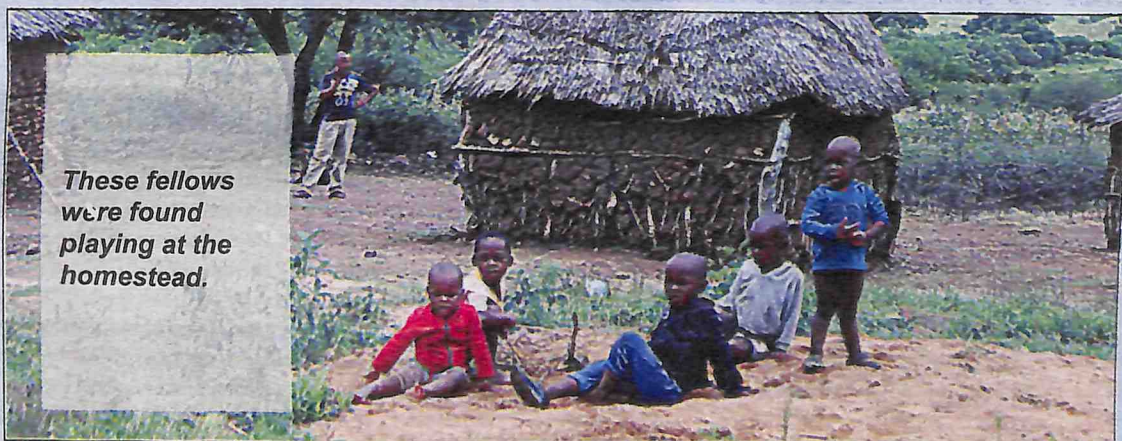
BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI

Perhaps it is high time the country runs programmes like 'Khumbul' ekhaya' as the number of missing people and displacement of relatives is on the rise.

Two families at Ekuphumleni are looking for their relatives who have not been seen in a long time.

'Khumbul' ekhaya' is a 48 minute weekly television series showing on the SABC 1 channel. The show tracks the journeys of (mostly) South Africans who ask the programme for help in their search to heal their relationships with lost or estranged family members.

Nonhlanhla Siyaya (41) from Ekuphumleni is searching for relatives of four children who are reportedly from the Manzini region. The four children were brought by



These fellows were found playing at the homestead.

their parents to live with their grandmother at Ekuphumleni in Lavumisa some years ago. Soon after they relocated, the children lost their parents, and as a result they had to live with their grandmother who also is now deceased.

It is upon seeing that the children had no one left that Siyaya took responsibility to adopt them. She says when she asks them about their relatives, they say they do not know them as they were young during the relocation. Only one child has a hint

as she says her family is around Elangeni area but doubts that she can be able to recognise the exact location as she was young when she left.

"They were staying in Manzini before and came with their parents

who were sick to stay with their granny here.

It was not long before they passed having not told us the relatives of these children," she said.

She has six children of her own and the four adopted orphans.

Siyaya is now appealing for assistance as she can no longer provide for the 11 children she is living with since she is also unemployed.

Siyaya says though she may appreciate food hampers as assistance, she prefers a sustainable intervention such as starting a farming business. She would like to raise both broilers and indigenous chickens and sell them to the community. She says with such help, she can manage to support her children children she doubts she will be successful in finding their relatives.

Currently, she lives on temporal jobs in the cotton fields and doing laundry for some people within the community. Siyaya says her heart is

Bigger dreams for the disadvantaged

Looking after children alone does not satisfy Gogo Nde.

Tsabile Victoria Mndzebele-Simelane says her ultimate dream is to see the construction of a self-sustainable village completed. "I donated 23 hectares of land towards the construction of an orphanage, clinic and a skills centre to assist drop outs get a second chance in life," she said. The area of Zenzile is in dire need of health services

while the youth need mentorship in order to aspire to be great in life and achieve their dreams. "You can choose the white guy is Mr Dennis Little from Texas who assist about 25 children under my care through Pasture Valley. He comes once every year to spend Christmas lunch with over 400 kids he sponsors. The group photos our friend Welile Dlamini with her friends paid us a visit they wanted to play with the

kids. Supporters of Mamelodi Sundowns local branch also donated school shoes to some kids."

You have a wide range to choose from and the name of the lady who is disabled is Celiwe Lukhele, whom Philani Maswati will register her company so that she can sustain herself. She wants to teach others IT. Her wish is to have mobile classroom so that she can move to various communities.

permanently employed by the Civil Service Board (now CSC) as I had hoped and I was instead taken on a temporal basis. I was however to later learn that some permanent positions were for those who were willing to compromise their honour," she alleged, adding how she was not willing to have sex with a man to secure employment.

"It was difficult because as a contract employee, I could not get a house nor was I eligible for travel allowance," she said.

Contract

It was while she was working as a contract employee that she and her fellow colleagues were deployed to work as protocol officers during an event.

"While at the event, a person collapsed and I was called upon to accompany her to the hospital," she said. While in the ambulance, she got the person's identity by going through his pockets. "Unfortunately, he died while on the way to hospital. When I reported about the incident, the precision with which I gave information amazed

some people in authority who said I could do well to work in the police service."

This is how Simelane found herself working as a police officer, an occupation she joined in 1977 when she moved to the Police College. "I graduated with the commandant's prize," she said of the pride she felt on passing out. Little did she know that her joy would be short-lived as she was to later be injured for life while on the line of duty.

Less than a year after becoming a fully-fledged police officer, Simelane was involved in a crippling accident.

"Immediately after graduation, I was posted to Nhlangano Police Station," she said. In 1978 while on duty with her partner, they were involved in an accident wherein she broke her right leg.

"We were at Mehlwabovu when the accident happened and when I was rushed to the hospital, the doctor rushed to have my leg put in a cast as it was swollen and further ignored by shoulder which was adversely affected.

She was thereafter trans-

ferred to Hlathikulu. This saw her having to tone down and was later retired on medical grounds. "I was nominated to attend a course at the Institute of Development Management in Botswana. This is where I got my certificate in financial management, where upon I then was engaged at the police headquarters," she said.

She then applied for variation as she wanted to return to the accountancy cadre and was transferred to the ministries of health, education and treasury departments where she rose through the ranks and became a senior accountant.

She was present during the formation of the Public Service Pensions Fund. However, her career was cut short when old injuries from the accident flared up and she was confined to a wheel chair where it was said she would never rise from.

Despite the proclamation that she would not stand on her own again, Simelane defied her doctors as she now moves around on two crutches, enabling her a great degree of independence.

willing to assist the children but her means are limited. Making her wish impractical is that all the children look up to her as she is their bread winner. She says they have no one to help them as they don't know their relatives.

When asked if she attempted to locate the relatives of these children, she stated that she was hindered by the fact that she didn't know where to start and who to look for.

A neighbour to her, Gogo Velephi Vilane said they were in the same boat as she stays with eight grandchildren from her three daughters, who went to work in the firms and no longer come back home to support their children.

Vilane says they used to

come on Christmas holidays but now she only heard from a teacher that her daughter passed by the school to pay for one of her granddaughter.

She says the other two daughters have not showed up in a long time, as she cannot recall the last time they pay her a visit and the children, which have now become her burden.

She said during their visits, they used to give her some money to buy food except when it was time to pay school fees where she did not get any as they reported to have emptied it on school necessities for the children.

Gogo said now they just disappeared and left her with the eight children and she had no idea of their where-

abouts. When asked on how she supported the children by herself, she said she only depended on the elderly grants and those given to her by Red Cross Society. But she expressed her worry as she had learned this was the last month of receiving those grants (from Red Cross).

Vilane said when the meals they had bought using the grants were finished, they relied on handouts from other neighbours as they often slept on empty stomachs. She said they have even learnt to cook small quantities just to get by.

Vilane also appealed for assistance as she stated that it was hard for her to make ends meet as she is now old and had no energy to fend for her eight grandchildren.



The home of 74-year-old Gogo Ndlovu (circled) which is only a few metres away from the donga caused by the fall of the boulder at Makholokholo along the Mbabane - Ngwenya Highway. (Pics: Mloni Mpanza)

Gogo (74) living in fear after Makholokholo rock fall

BY MLONDI MPANZA

The rock fall that happened a week ago along the Mbabane - Ngwenya Highway, has left a 74-year-old woman of Makholokholo in a traumatic state as her home is on the verge of falling into a donga, following the rock fall.

With at least three metres separating her home and the donga, the woman identified as Gogo Ndlovu is pleading for a quick intervention in the matter, least she suffers adverse consequences.

According to reports, the rock fell last week Friday during the heavy rains that affected a number of parts in the country, especially the capital, experienced severe flooding and subsequently traffic jams were witnessed.

Visited on Wednesday, a visibly shocked and helpless Gogo Ndlovu, who lives with her grandson, revealed that she still did not believe what had happened and this was in fact she had witnessed it with her naked eye.

Prior, she only heard reports of such from the radio and had not anticipated going through such a terrifying act which she described as the work of the devil.

"This is my first time seeing this, I still cannot believe it happened to me as you can see this house is on the verge of falling into the donga," she explained, as she pointed at the house which is a couple of metres away from the donga.

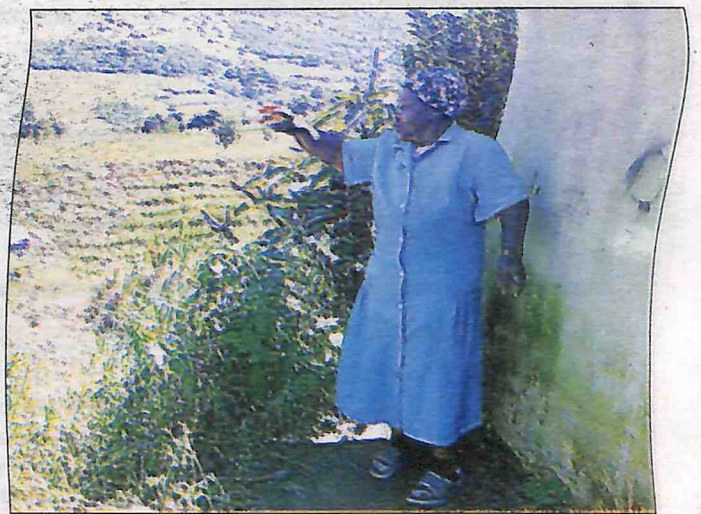
Home

She explained that they felt a loud sound on the fateful day, which drew their attentions and when they rushed to inspect what had happened, they realised the boulder located a few metres from their home had rolled down the cliff.

An alarmed Gogo Ndlovu emphasised several times that she was pleading for assistance with regards to filling up the donga, adding she had had a visit on Tuesday from officials she said were from Parliament led by Mbabane West Member of Parliament, Esther Dlamini,



The home of Gogo Ndlovu in Makholokholo.



Gogo Ndlovu pointing at the donga whilst standing behind a block of flats near it.

who inspected the donga and advised her not to panic.

She said they promised this was nothing she should worry about as they would make efforts to get the necessary assistance and have the donga filled.

Calling for her calm, they shared to her that there had been a number of similar cases whereby dongas were filled up with ease. When told of one that was filled at Mhlabubovu, she seemed to recall that too as having been mentioned by the said officials. The old woman said she suspected that the soil had lost its compatibility due to the heavy rains witnessed since the beginning of the year, which might have led to the huge rock falling off to the highway and luckily it did not cause

any injuries. Asked when her home was built, she could not recall except for pointing out that her last born daughter was born whilst living there, whose son she said was over 20 years.

Before concluding the brief interview, she thanked God for protecting her, as well as for the fact that the boulder had not caused any accident when it went down towards the highway.

Problems

She, however, pointed yet another rock, which was almost in the same position as the one that rolled down which she said could cause problems in the near future and hoped that whosoever that came to her rescue, would find a way to address the situation urgently.

Focus on SA scene

'DEMOCRACY WAS GOOD IN THE PAST'

DURBAN – Democracy is flawed and no longer works, former SABC COO Hlaudi Motsoeneng said on Friday.

"Democracy was good in the past," he said during an ANCYL 'economic freedom' lecture at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

He was speaking about municipalities, which he said had executive committees that represented themselves and not the people.

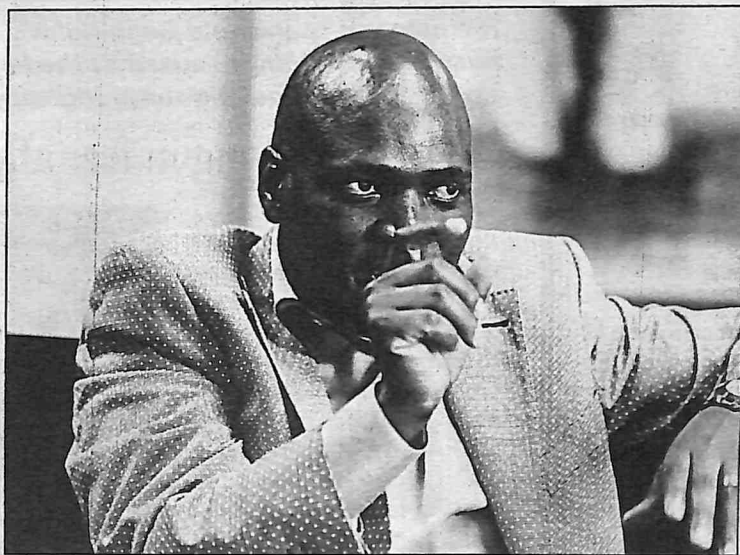
"They cannot implement good policy because they have been captured. By who? By those not even in our country," he claimed.

Motsoeneng said he did not believe in research for what he called "obvious matters". He used education funding as an example.

"How do you research when you know parents cannot afford to pay for their own children at tertiary level? What kind of research would you be doing when you know already?"

He said he empowered blacks when he implemented his 90% local music content policy on radio stations during his tenure at the public broadcaster. "The majority of South Africans support what we have been doing at the SABC."

Launching into one of his infamous self-indulgent rants, he said that while the SABC had stripped



Former SABC COO Hlaudi Motsoeneng.

him of his COO title, it had not stripped him of himself.

"When I was still at the SABC they took the title, but not the reality of Hlaudi. There is only one Hlaudi in SA, that is this one."

He said South Africans needed to move away from only becoming doctors, lawyers, and teachers.

"The reality is we do not need all of them to do that. You cannot have everyone trying to be teachers when they cannot get jobs. We also need plumbers and others."

Progressive Professionals Forum head Jimmy Manyi said at the event that young people needed to understand that white monopoly capital was made up of a handful of companies. "The top five banks. The cell-phone companies. Why are there only a handful? The metals industry is another good example."

Manyi said the oligarchs had to be stripped of their power.

"They say just leave those companies and do your own thing. There is no own." *News24*

NUMSA joins calls for Dlamini's head

CAPE TOWN – NUMSA on Friday joined the chorus calling for Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini to be fired in the wake of the social grants debacle.

"For the last three years, Dlamini has displayed a flagrant disregard for the livelihoods of 17 million of our most vulnerable citizens," the National Union of Metalworkers of SA Deputy General Secretary Karl Cloete said in a statement.

On Wednesday, the Constitutional Court ordered the department to explain why it would not meet the March 31 deadline to insource social grant payments.

In 2014, the court ruled that the contract with the current social grant distributor, Cash Paymaster Services (CPS), was illegal and invalid. It suspended the order of invalidity until March 31 this year to allow the department and the SA Social Security Agency to insource the administrative requirements to distribute grants.

Cloete described the current situation as a "man-made delay" caused by officials. He said it may result in the contract being enforced, to allow CPS and its holding company Net1 to continue disbursing social grants.

News24

DA, ANC to battle for beaufort west municipality

CAPE TOWN – It's now a battle between the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the African National Congress (ANC) for who has the better ward councillor candidate for the upcoming by-elections in Beaufort West.

The by-elections will be held in May and the party that wins will take over the troubled municipality. The re-election takes place after Beaufort West mayor and ward 7 councillor Dorge Malooi stepped down two weeks ago.

Malooi's party, the Karoo Democratic Force (KDF), had one seat in coun-

cil and formed a coalition with the DA last year to help them wrestle control from the ANC.

But the ANC's Provincial Secretary Faiez Jacobs says they will deliver the best candidate for the job to secure a win. "So that we can restore the confidence and trust of the community and ensure that the municipality addresses the people's concerns. We're confident and optimistic that we can win the by-elections and return the municipality to an ANC-controlled municipality so that we can ensure transformation and service delivery."

News24

ANC says there are no friends in party

PORT ELIZABETH – It was time for young leadership in Nelson Mandela Bay, the ANC regional congress heard on Friday.

And factionalism had to be a thing of the past for the party to grow, regional task team convener Vuyani Limba said on the first day of the party's congress.

Limba has been one of the caretakers of the region after it was disbanded in 2014, and he is the first to admit it has been a mammoth task.

The Nelson Mandela Bay ANC congress got off to a slow start on Friday, with delegates only arriving after 10pm.

Limba was frank in assessing what the party had gone through since 2014.

He said infighting had cost the party the highly contested region.

"When we fight among ourselves, people will stay away from the polls," he said.

He said it was time for young people to lead to ANC in the region, a sentiment which was echoed by Andile Lungisa supporters in the

congress.

The incoming leadership needed to get rid of factionalism, as well as gatekeeping in the branches, which led to new members not being accepted.

Pride also had no place in the new leadership, he said.

"If we don't work together, we will be in trouble."

Leadership was earned, Limba said.

"We are not friends in the ANC, but comrades. I repeat, we are not friends," he said.

The congress also received messages of support from COSATU and SACP on Friday, which both used the opportunity to pass remarks at former leaders.

COSATU said they had long been treated as an enemy by ANC in Nelson Mandela Bay, while SACP called for new leadership to pick up the pieces of the "little power they now had".

SACP's Msingathi Sipuka outlined some of the weaknesses of the party in recent years.

News24

Social grants: problem, what problem?

PRETORIA – President Jacob Zuma met with Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini and Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan on Friday to discuss the social grants issue.

Zuma insisted grants would be paid, saying he has been reluctant to comment on the issue because people were behaving like "government missed making payments".

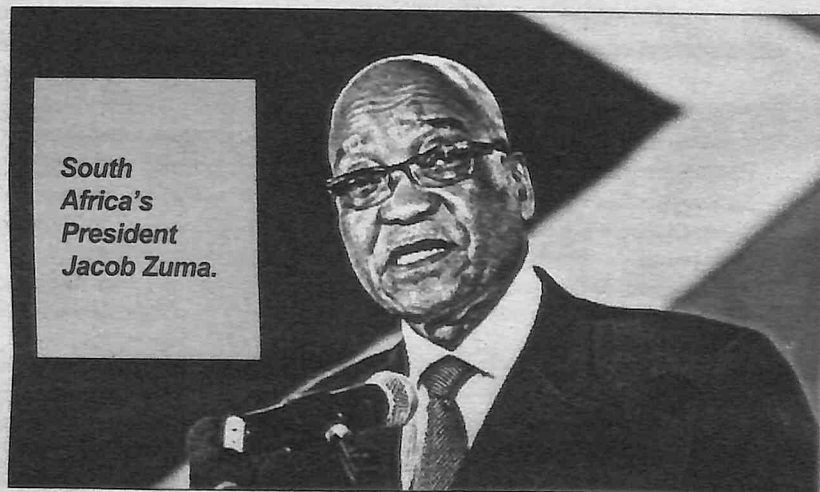
"My problem with that issue is that people are making judgement before the date, they are saying many things and I don't think it's right, just exciting the country," Zuma said.

Zuma was speaking at the Union Buildings after his presidential co-ordinating council meeting with ministers, premiers and local government officials.

He said he had met with Dlamini and Gordhan, to discuss the social pension grants debacle.

Dlamini, who appeared in Parliament on Tuesday before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, admitted that she has yet to secure the approval of Treasury to sign a new contract with Cash Paymaster Services.

However, Zuma told the media that people should remain calm because



South Africa's President Jacob Zuma.

grants will definitely be paid on April 1.

The president said if grants were not paid, action would be taken against those responsible.

"I think the country should be calm on this matter... I've instructed two ministers to make sure that it happens," he said.

"There's nothing that it should not happen, if that is the case you will realise what will happen (sic)."

Zuma said the meeting also focused on immigration, which was prompted

by the recent xenophobic violence and insisted that South Africa is not xenophobic.

"It's crime basically, it's crime and the competition for resources... It's not correct for us to jump into a conclusion which is an easy conclusion to make," he said.

"I'm making a comparison, Europe doesn't want people from Africa, from Middle East, they don't want them, it's a huge issue. Nobody – not a single one of us – is saying Europe is xenophobic. Why aren't we saying so?" *AFP*



SUNDAYOBSERVER AFRICA NEWS

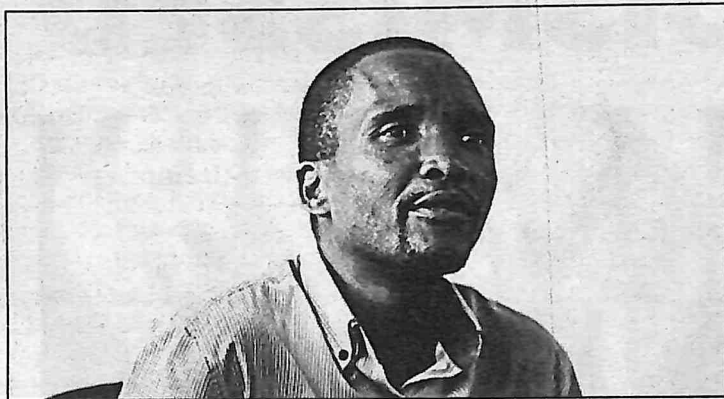
The right place | The right Sunday

ZIMBABWE COURT FREES MUGABE DEATH PROPHECY PASTOR

HARARE - A Zimbabwean court on Friday freed a pastor who was arrested after prophesying that President Robert Mugabe would die on October 17. High Court judge Justice Priscilla Chigumba granted Remnant Pentecostal Church leader Patrick Mugadza \$50 (R660) bail. The cleric had spent 53 days in detention.

Mugadza was arrested on January 16, and charged with criminal nuisance for prophesying that the Zimbabwean leader would die on October 17 this year.

His lawyers, Obey Shava and Gift Mtisi - from the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights - petitioned the High Court seeking their client's release on bail after Harare Magistrate Vongai Muchuchuti on January 19



Kariba based pastor Patrick Mugadza who predicted the death of President Robert Mugabe by claiming 93-year-old would breathe his last on October.

denied the cleric bail.

In denying Mugadza bail, Magistrate Muchuchuti had ruled that the clergyman had a propensity to commit similar offences.

But Shava and Mtisi, in their bail appeal, argued against the ruling, saying the magistrate had "erred and misdirected" herself in denying him bail, since her basis on

applied to "serious offences" and those who would have already been convicted.

Chigumba ruled against the lower court's ruling saying its reason was not compelling enough, and granted the clergyman bail.

Meanwhile, Harare magistrate Lazini Ncube on Friday postponed Mugadza's trial, who is accused of insulting the national flag, on March 20.

The Remnant Pentecostal Church leader was arrested on November 18 by the police for allegedly wearing the national flag without first seeking permission from authorities.

The prosecution claimed that Mugadza contravened Section 6 of the Flag Act.

African News Agency

White farmer battles Mugabe's top aide in 'last minute' scramble for land

HARARE - A white commercial farmer in Matabeleland South in southern Zimbabwe is battling to have President Robert Mugabe's top aide leave a prime property, in what critics view as a "last minute" scramble for land akin to the biblical "last supper".

Ray Ndlukula, the Deputy Secretary for Cabinet and President's office, has laid siege on the farm located in Figtree amid revelations in court documents that are in News24's possession that he has other properties in the province.

The tussle for the prime property, which at one time supplied the entire Matabeleland and midlands with vegetables and milk, is turning out to be a long drawn out and expensive fight.

David Connolly says he has been to and from the courts but with little success to get Ndlukula off the property so he can do what he knows best: farming.

Centenary Farm has been in the Connolly's family hands since time immemorial, locals and the farmer say. But is now under siege from the top civil servant.

Not even political persuasion by other war veterans sympathetic to Connolly have dissuaded Mugabe's top aide from leaving the property. At one time, war veterans marched in solidarity and support of the white farmer known to have supported the locals even during the war of liberation, but this was in vain.

On his part, Ndlukula says just like any ordinary Zimbabwean he is entitled to benefit from Mugabe's controversial land reforms, according to court documents perused by News24. *News24*

Gambia coalition near collapse over legislative election

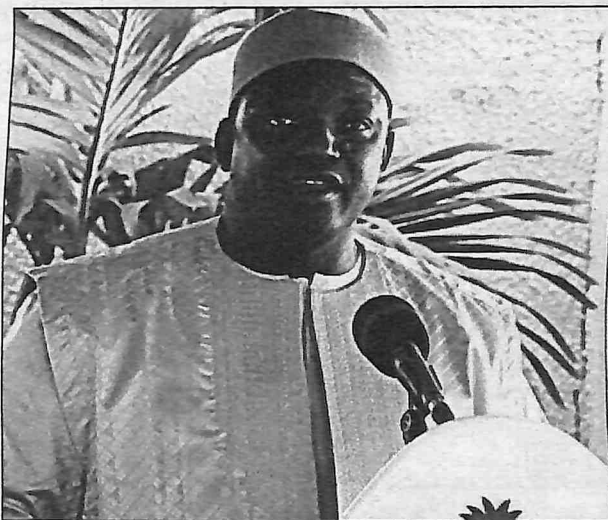
BANJUL - Gambian coalition parties which united last year to deliver the first new president in 22 years are unlikely to run together for legislative elections next month, a senior government source told AFP.

President Adama Barrow said in January his coalition government would "continue as a family" in selecting candidates for the national assembly poll on April 6, a declaration now thrown into doubt.

"We cannot reach an agreement on how to contest the Parliamentary election," a senior figure within Barrow's administration told AFP late on Thursday.

"One of the parties wants 36 of the 53 constituencies to be reserved for them. We are parting ways," the source said.

Candidate registration began on Thursday and lasts until today, pressuring the parties to find a deal.



Gambian President Adama Barrow.

The coalition figure voiced frustration that the infighting was likely to embolden the party of former president Yahya Jammeh, who ruled the country with an iron fist for two decades until leaving for exile in January.

Yankuba Colley, Chief Campaigner for Jammeh's Alliance for Patriotic

Reorientation and Construction (APRC), said he was confident of the party's chances.

"We are going to defeat our opponents in the forthcoming election and dominate the National Assembly. We are going to field candidates in all the constituencies. We are the biggest party," Colley told AFP. *AFP*

Niger begins trials of Boko Haram Jihadists

NIGER - Niger has begun the trials behind closed doors of about 1,000 suspected fighters from the Boko Haram jihadist movement, officials said Friday.

Chief prosecutor Chaibou Samna told AFP that the trials, on charges of terrorist links, had begun on March 2.

Those facing trial are from

several countries including Niger and Mali, Samna said, as well as neighbouring Nigeria where Boko Haram's deadly insurgency began in 2009 before spreading abroad.

Some of the suspects were "captured during combat" in southern Niger across the border from Boko Haram's stronghold in Nigeria, a security

source said.

Samna said the trials will last several months and mostly arise from offences entailing "not more than 10 years in prison".

"There have already been convictions and a large number of people freed for lack of evidence," he added.

AFP

BRIEFS

Enawo kills 38, displaces 53 000

ANTANANARIVO - Cyclone Enawo killed 38 people, injured 180 others and displaced 53 000 after it slammed into Madagascar earlier this week, the national disaster management agency said on Friday. The toll issued by the BNGRC agency was significantly higher than the earlier estimate of just four deaths and 10 000 people displaced issued on Thursday.

AFP

UN chief seeks to boost UN Police in DRC

NEW YORK - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday asked the Security Council to send an extra 320 UN Police to the Democratic Republic of Congo to help deal with possible outbreaks of election violence.

In a report obtained by AFP, Guterres said he was "deeply disturbed by the sharp increase in human rights violations" and argued that the new police units for the MONUSCO force would help protect civilians.

AFP

Buhari to 'formalise return to power'

ABUJA - Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari will send a letter to Parliament next week to formally resume power, after nearly two months away on medical leave, his spokesman said on Friday.

Femi Adesina said in a tweet that the letter to the National Assembly will be sent tomorrow, adding: "That makes his return to work formal, and constitutional."

AFP

'AU force needs troop surge'

MOGADISHU - The head of the African Union mission in Somalia is seeking a surge in troops to help the country's security forces control areas won back from the extremist group al-Shabaab.

Francisco Caetano Madeira says the Somalia National Army has been unable to take full charge of areas liberated by the 22 000-strong multinational AU force, as had been expected.

AP

'Hundreds of thousands of Nigerians trapped by conflict'

GENEVA - Hundreds of thousands of people in north eastern Nigeria remain beyond the reach of aid, trapped between Boko Haram Islamist insurgents and counter-insurgency operations that have left many without food or work, Doctors Without Borders said.

Those who reach health centres report continuing violence against civilians by both sides in Borno state, said Bruno Jochum, General Director of Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) Switzerland, upon return from the region.

Reuters

BRIEFS

'Belgium 'safer', returning fighters a threat'

BRUSSELS - A year after the Brussels bombings, Belgium is more secure, but it faces the threat of battle-hardened Jihadi fighters returning home as Islamic State makes its last stand, Interior Minister Jan Jambon said.

"The question is whether ISIS will order them to fight to the last man or tell them to go home and cause as much damage as possible," Jambon told AFP in an interview.

AFP

Undocumented migrants brace for deportation

LOS ANGELES - Adriana is preparing for the worst: deportation. She's worked it out in her head, but she still doesn't know how to tell her kids, who are terrified of losing her.

The Mexican-born mother of three began preparations after reading a pamphlet obtained at her son's school in a Los Angeles neighbourhood with many undocumented Hispanics.

It spells out what to do in case of an immigration emergency - a real and growing threat since President Donald Trump arrived in the White House on a promise to expel the 11 million people in the country illegally.

AFP

'Macron could beat Le Pen in French election'

PARIS - A new poll of French voter intentions yesterday showed Emmanuel Macron solidifying his support and still likely to defeat candidate Marine Le Pen in the May presidential run-off.

The BVA poll, published 43 days before the April 23 opening round, showed the independent centrist Macron scoring 26 per cent, up 2 per centage points from a week earlier and five points in the last 15 days. He is now level with the far-right Le Pen.

AFP

Police admit monk 'may have escaped'

BANGKOK - An elderly monk wanted for massive fraud may have escaped a three-week siege of his temple, Thai cops admitted yesterday, thwarting a much-trumpeted dragnet ordered by the kingdom's junta.

On February 16 the Thai junta invoked special powers to seal off the 404-hectare grounds of the Wat Dhammakaya temple on the outskirts of Bangkok.

AFP

Swiss man takes thousands of porn pics of boys

GENEVA - A Swiss man will go on trial this month on allegations he sexually abused more than 80 boys - some as young as nine - in Thailand, Swiss authorities said on Friday.

The unnamed man is accused of taking thousands of pornographic pictures of the boys, molesting some of them and pushing some into prostitution, prosecutors in the western Swiss canton of Fribourg said in a statement. The abuse is alleged to have taken place since 2001.

The man will go before the Gruyere criminal court on charges of human trafficking, encouraging prostitution, sexual acts with children and child pornography. AFP



SUNDAY OBSERVER WORLD NEWS

The right place | The right Sunday

DOZENS OF OBAMA-ERA PROSECUTORS DISMISSED

WASHINGTON - The administration of US President Donald Trump on Friday moved to clean house at the Justice Department, demanding the resignations of 46 federal prosecutors appointed during the two terms of his predecessor Barack Obama.

Presidents often order political appointees in several agencies to resign when they take office, but the abrupt nature of the move caught some by surprise - especially given that so many were asked to leave at once.

High-profile Manhattan prosecutor Preet Bharara was among those asked to leave - even though he met with Trump before the Republican took office and said he was asked to stay on.

Justice Department spokeswoman Sarah Isgur Flores said Attorney General Jeff Session had asked "all remaining 46 presidentially appoint-



US President Donald Trump.

ed US Attorneys to tender their resignations in order to ensure a uniform transition".

"Until the new US Attorneys are confirmed, the dedicated career prosecutors in our US Attorney's Offices will continue the great work

of the department in investigating, prosecuting, and deterring the most violent offenders."

Later on Friday, another Justice Department spokesman, Peter Carr, said Trump had asked two to stay on - current acting Deputy Attorney

General Dana Boente and the man he picked to take over that position, Rod Rosenstein.

"The president called Dana Boente and Rod Rosenstein tonight to inform them that he has declined to accept their resignation, and they will remain in their current positions," Carr said.

It was not immediately clear if other resignations would eventually be declined.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said he was "troubled" to learn of the mass request for resignations, especially that of Bharara, and said it had not been done in an "orderly fashion" as seen in the past.

"By asking for the immediate resignation of every remaining US Attorney before their replacements have been confirmed or even nominated, the president is interrupting ongoing cases and investigations and hindering the administration of justice," Schumer said in a statement on Facebook. AFP

Vladimir Putin, Erdogan hail mended ties

MOSCOW - Russia's President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday announced the "normalisation" of ties between their nations, damaged by Ankara downing one of Moscow's warplanes in 2015.

"We can state with confidence that our countries have returned to the path of a true multi-tiered cooperation between partners," Putin told a press conference after the two strongmen met at the Kremlin. Relations between Moscow and Ankara hit rock bottom after Turkey's shooting down of a Russian warplane over the Syrian border in November 2015, which Putin then labelled a "stab in the back".

The two have reconciled since, notably cooperating on Syria and backing a ceasefire in December which significantly reduced violence in the war-



Russia's President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

wracked country.

"In the last few months, the steps we have taken together have meant we have closed the gap in normalising bilateral relations," said Erdogan.

"I believe the normalisation process has ended. We don't want to utter this phrase any longer," he said, adding he expected Russia to "completely lift the sanctions" imposed after the

plane's downing.

The two leaders also signed a new economic cooperation plan and agreed to create an investment fund worth up to \$1 billion (R13.19 billion), said Putin.

The Russian leader hailed the joint efforts on Syria, crediting the coordinated actions of Russia, Turkey and Iran for "considerably lowering the level of violence." AFP

Theresa May could be handed the power to trigger Article 50

LONDON - A tight-lipped Theresa May has refused to tell European Union leaders when she plans to kickstart Brexit - as speculation grows she could do so on Tuesday.

The prime minister is expected to be handed the power to trigger Article 50 by Parliament as soon as tomorrow.

Whitehall is on full alert to begin divorce talks within days but Mrs May could wait until the final week of March to begin the process.

At a summit in Brussels on Thursday night, EU leaders pushed her to share her plans. The prime minister said they 'made clear to me that they want to get on with negotiations and so do I'.

Brussels officials believe the PM could choose to wait until after the EU has celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome on March 25.

Concerns have been raised that Mrs May would be starting the negotiations on the wrong foot if she overshadowed the festivities.

Angela Merkel said the remaining 27 member states believe she could surprise the EU by acting very soon.

Rumours spread last night as it was revealed all three of her Brexit Cabinet ministers will appear on political TV shows tomorrow.

Last night Labour appealed to Mrs May to allow two major changes to the law that will allow Britain's divorce talks with the European Union to begin.

Daily Mail

Wikileaks revelations put CIA on back foot

WASHINGTON - Another major leak of top secret materials has again put America's top spies in hot water - while delivering a coup for anti-secrecy group WikiLeaks.

The group left the Central Intelligence Agency heavily bruised with the publication

on Tuesday of nearly 9 000 documents it said were only part of a huge trove of records, plans and malware code in its possession - purportedly the entire CIA hacking arsenal.

Careless

Adding insult to injury, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange scolded the agency

as extremely careless to have lost control of the materials - WikiLeaks said they got access to it via the circle of private contractors to US intelligence.

"This is a historic act of devastating incompetence, to have created such an arsenal and then stored it all in one place," Assange said. AFP

A black and white photograph of a woman with long, dark braids, looking upwards and to the right. She is positioned in front of a dark wooden bookshelf filled with books. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting her face and the texture of her braids. The overall mood is contemplative and intellectual.

**READ AND
CHANGE THE
WORLD**

Ayanda Dlamini

WRITER'S NOTE:



We would like to apologise for not having your favourite section SCENE in our last publication, we had a few technical glitches here and there.

Coming back to our ISSUE today; The bookworm Issue, When was the last time you read a book, or a magazine article?

Do your daily reading habits centre around social media? Well, if you're one of countless people who don't make a habit of reading regularly, you might be missing out.

Reading has become a lifestyle; we spent our most time reading different books that educate, motivates or humour us.

You know sometimes a book comes into your life at exactly the moment that you most need to read it. Whatever issue or issues you may have silently been dealing with, or avoiding dealing with, is likely to surface in whatever new book you pick up.

So today we have bookworms who have made the move from TV and gadgets to spending most of their time on reading. We have Nomfundo Jiyane, Sanele Mduli and Sibongiseni Mamba; they share what books they are currently reading, favourite authors, what makes a good book and what influences their book buying choice. Mind you, the call themselves 'The Book Hive'. Get cultivated on PAGE four and five.

As my boss would say 'reading improves your vocabulary', the more you read, the more words you gain exposure to, and they'll inevitably make their way into your everyday vocabulary.

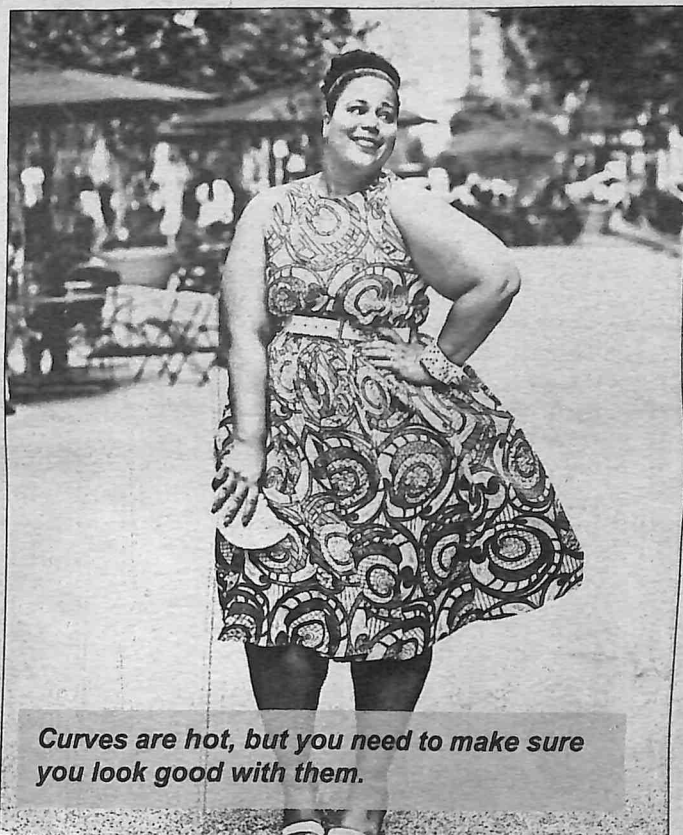
Being articulate and well-spoken is of great help in any profession, and knowing that you can speak to higher-ups with self-confidence can be an enormous boost to your self-esteem.

Let's stay away from the TVs for a while and join the Book Hive!

In our fashion section this week, we have few tips for plus-sized women. Ladies, you don't have to hide your curves but if you want to look your best, you need to make sure your proportions are balanced and that you've got the curves on all the right places. Get your tips on the same page.

Till next week, enjoy!

Yandie.



Curves are hot, but you need to make sure you look good with them.



Show the world that you have something that a petite girl doesn't have.

FASHION TIPS FOR PLUS-SIZED WOMEN WITH YANDI

Rule #1: Avoid oversized clothes, but they'll only make you look bigger and you'll end up looking like a walking TENT!

Ladies, ladies, come on slim or plus size, look good it's just easy; you don't have to follow certain trends but try something classic. Before we even get to our tips for plus size women today, avoid wearing robes that makes you look like a tent! It's not attractive and inappropriate ladies.

(P.S I'm not the biggest fan of using the term 'plus size' but then again aren't we all just 'sizes'?)

Curves are hot, but you need to make sure you look good with them. You want to look curvaceous, not frumpy.

That means avoiding anything that makes you look bulky and rather focus on smoothing out your lumps and bumps.

You don't have to hide your curves but if you want to look your best, you need to make sure your proportions are balanced and that you've got the curves in all the right places. Curves are very attractive to some gents, so relax and flaunt your curves! Now let's indulge in our tips:

For this you need to pay attention to what details you put on your body frame and how you combine the colours of your outfit.

Compared to petites you have more space to work with and you can handle bigger details, however, it's extremely important that you select details that are scaled to your body size. Because if you for



You can wear monochrome too.

example, put on a dainty necklace, you'll emphasise your large proportions.

Ensure proper fit. I know how tempting it is to hide your body in layers and oversized clothes, but they'll only make you look bigger! Great fit makes sure nothing looks lumpy. Lumpy is frumpy.

Your bra is especially important - it has to fit to keep your bust up and eliminate unevenness in your silhouette that will only distract the eye.

Dress Your Body Shape

The first thing you need to do before shopping for women's plus size clothing is to take a close look at the proportions of your body figure.

Remember, there are both tall and short full figure women, and each and one of them has a different body shape that requires different set of styling to look their best.

You can wear monochrome too 'Don't wear white or bright colours, it makes you look fat' - I hate this statement whole heartedly.

I mean really guys. This is the dumbest opinion ever. Listen here darlings; you can wear any colour you desire on that day as long as it's your size. I repeat as long as it's your size. This goes back to knowing your body shape; hour glass figure or rectangular shaped, this will help you pick your right size

and look gorgeous.

Do You Have Short or Long Legs?

Also, another key factor to dressing your full-figure size is your body frame's vertical line; meaning, how long your upper half is compared to your bottom half. You might have longer or shorter legs than your upper body or vice versa, which also requires a couple of outfit adjustments.

Short legs can make you look stumpy so try something long in most cases. If you have super long legs, I guarantee you; go for short dresses or skirts.

You can wear heels too

Wear heels. If you're not a high-heel girl, then an inch or two is enough to slim your legs and body figure. Trust me you, you will look amazing. Have your signature walk (this applies to every girl, plus size or petite)

Try to not follow trends

I said the same thing to the boys on our last ISSUE (Men's fashion). Trends are not for everyone,

Just because something is trendy doesn't mean it will always be flattering. Some people may be able to pull off the latest trends while others may be better off sticking to more classic styles.

Emphasise your assets

We all have body parts which are eye pleasing, right? Well, decorate them. It may be your toned legs, killer curves, or cleavage. Show the world that you have something that a petite girl doesn't have.

Till next week

SOCIAL
SCENESocial Media
Watch

Guys, allow me to laugh for a second! social media though! Illa Pen boy just released his 'Dzeberetse' video recently and most fans had nothing to say about the video. Is it because it's a good video or what? Well, I guess it's okay, in actual fact I would give him 7/10.

Illas video snapshots where posted on social media and fans

were impatiently waiting to see the finished video, it came out and no critics or positive reviews about the video. Fans went silent. Yet on Sands' Tigi video everyone was on toes telling him what to do such that he even removed the video on YouTube.

Maybe its Illa response to Tigi's critics 'Yakho yini', so fans are skeptical to comment on the

video.

Anyway, artists should be open to criticism in order to improve their craft. The moment you ask someone to listen to your music, allow them to critic.

Come back to 'Dzeberetse' video, the video portrays Kangaroo, Illa Penboy and Setsa Ginindza living lavish and surrounded by beautiful women which you basic hip hop video. The quality is of international standard and it got many music lovers talking while in anticipation of the full video which will be dropped sometime this week.

The video came into the reality through a production company known as 'NoDoubt TV' which is DJ Stitches entity who also directed it (the video.) Also, Esibayeni Lodge powered the project by offering its premises. Other artists on the video are Kangaroo and Setsa Ginindza who is also close allies with Illa Penboy. The



video also has a bunch of beautiful ladies who add 'swag' to the video.

The hip hop head said he was confident on the quality of the video and his fans would not be disappointed "We are planning to upload the

video on YouTube then make sure we take it to local TV stations and international platforms like Channel O, MTV Base and many more," he said.

We are patiently waiting for that moment.

BRAINS BEHIND SWARTY NIGHTS

"SwArty Night is a concept created to help connect artists to their community and sub-cultures in a very informal but exclusive way. Artists have a platform to present their work and the audience supports, engages and offers feedback in their response."

She believes her SwArty concept was a platform that was needed in Swaziland.

Chantal Nyandwi is a Rwandan refugee who grew up in the Mpaka Refugee Camp. After visiting the camp for the first time, she was overcome with the hope, tenacity, and capability of those living in the camp, which inspired her to create the Free to Dream movement.

The movement is meant to be inclusive and universal, as we can lose many freedoms in life, but never the freedom to dream.

"Free to Dream aims to inspire the Refugee kids of Mpaka-Malindza and has grown through my curiosity and passion about people and the culture I live in," she says.

"It is this same curiosity and connectedness to the community, particularly the creativity imbedded in the community that inspired me to start SwArty Nights."

She is not an artist per say, but a traditional Rwandan dancer, so creative expression is part of her identity. These passions coupled with her event organisation skills made organising SwArty Nights a natural fit.

"SwArty Night is a concept created to help connect artists to their community and sub-cultures in a very informal but exclusive way.

Artists have a platform to present their work and the audience supports, engages and offers feedback in their response."

She believes her SwArty concept was a platform that was needed in Swaziland.

"Swazi artists have been handed a platform on which they can showcase their talent every month, and interact with an audience eager to engage with the Swazi culture and



meet the artists.

The exchange has been beneficial to the fellow expatriates and the (unfortunate few) Swazis who came by, but artists seem to enjoy the exposure and feedback."

She is convinced that women like in any industry have historically been misrepresented and used more as sexual objects.

"The number of male artists is much bigger than that of female artists but they would of course be featured in almost every video

produced, and in very suggestive clothing."

This is something both Free to Dream and SwArty nights aim to rebalance, uplifting young women and female artists in particular.

"I think women artists still have to work twice as much as their fellow male artist, but that does not mean we will stop striving or looking for our own forums to break the moulds created for us."

Art, in any form, is her passion. She loves music and feel indebted

ed to singers and musicians because they speak to us continuously in our lives in sad, happy or any state of mind.

However, Chantal believes artists face different challenges such as lack of interest or support from Swazis for their own art.

"Only when an artist has fought his way out of Swaziland like the likes of Sands, KrTc of Hip Hop and Bholoja, Swazis finally started supporting him because he carried the Swazi flag out of the Kingdom."

"Women artists still face similar prejudices in contemporary society but in a different kind of way.

Most female artists have been made to believe that their talent alone is not enough.

I guess for me, they think they have to be half-naked to be able to sell. But in fact, talent is not seen, it is felt.

And here in Swaziland, you have some serious women talents: Floewe, Khole, Dzeli the Poet, The WordSmith, Thandwa, Ariane, Bongwiwe, Hanna Johnson, Velemseni, Fezile Mnisi, Nothando Ebony, Beko the Storyteller, Ncobile and Nxobile to just name the ones I was fortunate to work with.

I live each day to the fullest and try to do so to the best of my abilities. My hope is that when I leave Swaziland, people will remember that I tried to help the artists as much as I could; be it officially in the framework of the European Union's support to Swazi culture or the creative industry. It wouldn't be justice to leave out my thanks to H.E. Ambassador, Nicola Bellomo, for his enthusiasm and encouragement through my personal babies SwArty Nights and Free to Dream." *By Ayanda Dlamini*





THE BOOK

Reading has become a lifestyle to some individuals; it can be a fiction, romance or educational books.

Sometimes a book comes into your life at exactly the moment that you most need to read it. Whatever issue or issues you may

have silently been dealing with, or avoiding dealing with, is likely to surface in whatever new book you pick up.

Improve

Readers, books can improve your life because when you become engrossed in a

story, you learn to empathise.

So, if we keep reading books that make us think, ask questions, laugh, cry, and wonder; this can only benefit our lives and the lives of others.

So today SCENE has decided to bring

forth the bookworms as they share what book they are reading right now, favourite author, what makes a good book and what influences their book buying choice. We have Sanele Mdluli, Nomfundo Jiyane and Sibongiseni Mamba.

SANELE MDLULI

Sanele Mdluli is currently reading *The road less travelled* by M. Scott Peck.

In this book, Peck concludes that 'the miracles described indicate that our growth as human beings is being assisted by a force other than our conscious will.'

Bookworms have their own favourite authors and Sanele's favourite author is Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "I love how she uses fiction to speak to important emotional truths and make powerful social commentary on feminism, race and African culture," she says.

"Different authors feed me in different ways at different times. In the past year I have developed a love for African Literature."

Her book choices are influenced by best seller lists, recommendations from others, "I read everything, from romance to autobiographies to historical fiction to philosophy so my interests are wide. It also depends on the space I'm in. Right now, African authors are big for me."

The bookworm believes picking one absolute book is hard and she has a bucket list of books, she wants to re-read because they are epic clas-



sics.

She believes that the ability of the story teller to engage her imagination or draw emotions is what makes a good book to her.

Intellectually

"At times I need a book that will stretch me intellectually.

Sometimes a girl just wants a sim-

ple read to laugh and go to bed with thought," she laughs.

Books are fast moving to digital, Sanele has not caught on to the digital trend, "I really struggle. I'm an old fashioned book lover; I want to turn the pages, I want to smell the paper, I want to see it on my book shelf."



Dudu Busani - Dube, most favourite author.



NOMFUNDO JIYANE



Nomfundo Jiyane recently co-hosted 'Come meet the author' meet and greet event at Ezulwini with the South African author Dudu Busani- Dube of the Hlomu series. Reading has become her lifestyle.

She is currently reading *My Husband* by Busisiwe Precious Khumalo (A South African author).

She favours Dudu Busani-Dube, "I really like her style of writing and how she kept me energised throughout reading her series and still abuses me by letting me follow her on social media.

I thought I was over with fiction books until I met her. She creates an imagination of this world that you can almost feel and touch. Her story is about real life things," she tells

SCENE.

She believes a good book should be able to make the reader laugh, cry and also get to dream about the characters.

"It should have all these charac-



teristics. But most importantly it should be well written I should be able to follow the story without getting lost. Once I start telling people about the book I'm reading then you should know that it is really a good read."

"Books depend on one's needs it might be the issues currently happening in one's environment. It could be because it's talked about and most reviewed in the media. The mood I'm in that day mostly influences my book choice or even the writer too maybe he or she is talked about lately."

Jiyane recommends other bookworms to read one of Rhonda Byrne's collection,

"She taught me some of the principles I live by today.

I am a strong believer of the Law of Attraction. Without putting yourself in the right frequency, you will not achieve the things that are achieved at that level."

My book bucket list

1. Year of yes by Shonda Rhimes
2. The outlier by Malcolm Gladwell
3. Inspired Destiny by John Dermatini
4. The wait by Devon Franklin and Megan Good
5. I'm a different mess than I was yesterday by Msizi Nkosi.



COUNTRY'S TOP SOLOIST LEAVES MARK AT METRO FM AWARDS



He may have failed to defend his tenor chorale gong at the SwaziBank schools choral music competitions last year but Zweli Msibi is certainly one to watch.

Zweli won back-to-back tenor soloist awards at the SwaziBank choral competitions in 2014 and the subsequent year but missed out by a whisker last year. So gifted that he was assisting his teachers at Elangeni High School with coaching colleagues on the finer facets of music.

To cap it all, he also conducted the school choir at renowned events, inclusive of the national choral music competitions and cultural events under auspices of Swaziland Schools Sports Association (SSSA) and the Swaziland Schools Choral Music Association (SSCMA).

Upon winning in Swaziland in 2015 as the best tenor soloist amongst pupils at the high school level, he qualified to represent the country at the National Choral Music Achievement (NACMA) in SA. His star once again shone and he became the SADC region's best tenor soloist, hoisting the flag higher.

After his name was etched in the Swazi annals of choral music

greats and the region's too, he was snatched up by an SA based producer (in Marian hill to be precise) who proposed to record a debut classical/opera music compilation.

However, being focused on his studies, Zweli asked to shelve the recording deal for the time being and concentrate on his studies as he was doing Form Five at Elangeni High when this opportunity came knocking. As a result the debut classic/opera music compilation recording is set for this year.

To add a feather to his hat, last weekend Zweli appeared as a guest at the 16th Metro FM Awards, which were staged at the International Convention Centre in Durban, SA. He met the likes of Kwesha and his SA recording manager Erick Mbeko alongside the organisers of the Metro FM Awards.

There he left an indelible mark with fans and fanatics alike and will likely be a constant feature at this prestigious ceremony going forward.

"I can confirm that we've reached an agreement with my agent and the organisers of the Metro FM Awards that I'll perform in upcoming events of this stature. This is



ABOUT ZWELI MSIBI

- Is the SADC region's best tenor soloist
- Also the country's leading tenor soloist who has won back-to-back titles under auspices of SwaziBank sponsored schools music competitions
- Has just completed his Form Five at Elangeni High School
- Last year he attended the Wonderful Days Youth Festival in Denmark, where he impressed

organisers such that he would be returning this year.

- Is set to record a classical and opera music compilation in RSA.
- A versatile singer who's now into classical music after doing choral for sometime
- In December 2016 he collaborated with upcoming hip hop star Nkamba Nkamba (real name Mloni Mngomezulu) in the latter's debut album
- He's now doing romantic, gospel and classical music.

unprecedented and unbelievable; in only a few years of debuting on the top stage," exclaimed the excited Zweli.

Whilst in Durban, he also signed a contract with the company that's set to record his upcoming classical or

opera music compilations.

"We are yet to decide whether I'll do classical or opera music hence am uncertain which route we're headed to now but one thing is certain; upward mobility and forwards ever. I've learnt

cal music.

- Has been busy as a bee; appearing at corporate events such as the MTN breakfast meeting and staff end of year awards, Matsapha Evangelical Church, etc.
- Is a member of Mbabane Methodist Choral Choir.
- Presently mentoring and grooming pupils at Hillside and St. Paul's High on finer aspects of choral music in preparation for forthcoming SwaziBank choral competitions.

a lot through doing collaborations with Nkamba Nkamba (an upcoming local hip hop artist).

"Whilst in SA I also met Kwesha and he taught me a lot on music; in fact am learning on daily basis in this craft".

OTHER WOMEN IN ART



BEKO THE STORYTELLER



DZELI THE POET



NANA MAGAGULA



THANDWA DLAMINI

80 SCRIPT GETS TWO GIGS IN ONE WEEK

It is greener on Rapper 80 Script's side as he got two gigs in a week. On Wednesday it was announced that he will be performing at the MTN Bush Fire 2017 and on Friday it was announced that KOOL Swazi Entertainment has added the phenomenal 80 Script on the line-up for their ultimate 'Picnic Party' at Buckswood Lodge.

Success

80 Script is one of the most respected rappers in the country, who is known for his rhythmic flow. Last year, he hosted his sole show dubbed 'The Soiree' which was a resounding success. The rapper confirmed his performance and said he was the surprise artist for the night and will be sharing the stage with Zolani&38, Lady B, Gang Stars and Sunshine Rappers. On the ones and twos will be; Shibz, Njebza, Lady Cream, Deep Motion vs Freestyle, Mazwelany, Mfundo, Bee, Kwethu, Twins of a Kind, Matamza, Speech, Kirsh and Deal Deal.

80 Script promised his fans and fun lovers nothing but energy in his performance.



MTN Bush Fire Early Bird physical tickets out and limited

In the commencement of the early bird campaign, MTN Bushfire 2017 activated physical tickets on Friday but these are limited.

While tickets have been selling online since December 2016, MTN Bushfire has now released tickets for customers that prefer the physical tickets over the digital option.

MTN Bushfire tickets are avail-

able from MTN service centres in Mbabane, Corporate Place and Manzini, Riverstone Mall as well as Malandela Internet Café in Malkerns.

Options

Ticketing options include Full Festival Golden Lounge, Full Festival Main Arena, Friday Main Arena, Saturday Main Arena, Sunday Main Arena and Full Festival for Children.

Another big gig for Sherd Brothers

NEW kids on the block, spinners Sherd Brothers have made the cut into Elite Season Two. They join nine other upcoming musicians who will be performing at the Esibayeni Lodge on April

16.

The other artists include Home boys SD, Harristheiner and Swiss, Charles P, Hani G, Smokey and Wigo, Marcus, Jocquer LeVae, Eimsofly and DJ Charm. The list is yet to be trimmed

down to top three performers, and these are going to eventually perform at the event. The top three will then be determined by the number of votes accumulated by each artist.

The voting process according to the event organiser is run on different social media platforms. "the festival

opened a platform on social media for artists to lobby their fans to vote for them, it has been a month long process which has brought it down to our top ten and the race is still on as the public continues to vote", event organiser Shiki Mbewu said.

Mbewu further explained that Roka

Swazi partnered with Mark swag and their fan base to make this event come to life. The two fashion houses will further clothe the winners as they perform on the night.

He also mentioned that combining fashion and music was a great way to attract their target audience.

Nicki Minaj responds to Remy Ma's diss track with three new singles

On Thursday evening, the Queens MC premiered not one, but three singles with plenty of references and responses to Remy Ma's diss track, "Shether."

And the leader of the Barbz recruited her Big 3 partners Drake and Lil Wayne for "No Frauds," in which she claps back at Remy's follow-up single, "Another One."

"You can't be Pablo if your work ain't sellin' / What the f— is this bitch inhalin' / Tried to drop 'Another One,' you was itchin' to scrap / You exposed your ghostwriter / Now you wish it was scrapped," Minaj raps.

She also released "Regret In Your Tears" and "Changed It" featuring Wayne.

The new singles are the first Minaj has released since her feud with Ma reached a boiling point last month. On Feb. 25, Remy dropped a seven-minute-long song in which she accused Minaj of everything from plastic surgery to infidelity.

At the time, fans speculated that the song was a response to lyrics Minaj spits in two new singles — Gucci Mane's



"Make Love" and Jason Derulo's "Swalla" — that were allegedly about her. (Others guessed that the lyrics were actually directed at another rival, Azealia Banks.)

Ma, 36, rose to fame after offering a verse to the 2004 Fat Joe and Terror Squad hit "Lean Back." In 2008, she went to prison after being convicted for assault, illegal weapon possession

and attempted coercion; she was released six years later in 2014 and cemented her comeback with her latest Fat Joe collab "All the Way Up," which was nominated for two Grammys this year.

As it turns out, Ma's beef with Minaj, 34, began before she was behind bars. As Rolling Stone previously reported, their feud has been ongoing for years.

Minaj seemingly blasted Ma on her track "Dirty Money" off a 2007 EP, in which she raps, "Tell that bitch with the crown to run it like Chris Brown" while sampling one of Ma's Terror Squad songs "Yeah Yeah Yeah." And after Ma was released from prison, she freestyled over Minaj's 2014 hit "Truffle Butter."

Ma recently told BuzzFeed she was "not particularly proud" of slamming Minaj in "Shether."

"I do not condone or recommend the tearing down of another female," she said in the interview.

"That's not what I do. Anybody that knows me knows that I embrace females. I always want to do some girl-oriented thing."



Behind the Scene

WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER (WWT) THIRD EDITION MEET AND GREET



Ladies came in numbers for the Women Working Together (WWT) third edition Meet and Greet hosted by Thulile Zwane, popularly known as 'Pasha'. The event was held at the Mogi Boutique Hotel situated in Ezulwini.



Pasha stressing a point to the ladies.



The ladies empowering each other at the event.



Luxuria founder Xolile Zandamela educating the ladies about her coffee and chocolate tasting.



Pasha flanked by Women Working Together team Jane and Zanele Tsabedze- Vilakati.



The say friends who support each other are for keeps; Phylicia Augustsa, Pinky Glover and the owner of Janelle Beauty Parlour Jenny pose with the host (2nd r) Pasha Zwane.



The ladies attentively listening to one of the speakers.



Pasha's colleagues Tanele Dlamini and Tengetile Hlophe came to support Pasha.



Selfie moment for Pasha and Kim du Pont.

THE RED PEN



Phila Dlamini
Vilakati

TO BE A WOMAN

I received an interesting text the other day about this couple who had gone through a really hard time in life. Apparently things were so bad that the two decided to commit suicide together.

They resolved to jump off a building. When they got to the top floor, they both agreed to count to three and jump; at the same time. On the third count, the woman jumped but the man stayed. As the man watched his wife fall to what was meant to be 'their' death, he saw her pulling out a parachute and lo and behold, she landed safely.

Question is; who betrayed who? Who is deceitful? Who is wiser? Men are cunning; yes, but women are smart and reliable! I can bet you the wife would have used that parachute to save them both if her husband threw himself down with her.

Coincidentally this text came through on Women's Day and it was not fundamentally related to this day, but it made me appreciate women for who they are. It doesn't matter that it's the 12th today; Happy Women's Day to any woman reading this. Let us discover, understand and appreciate who we really are. Perhaps the actual day just went by and all you got was that pretty, forwarded 'Happy Women's Day' text, without even realising what this day was really about.

Apparently this day has been observed since the early 1900s and is now recognised each year on March 8, throughout the world. The original aim of the day – to achieve full gender equality for women – has still not been realised. A gender pay gap persists across the globe and women are still not present in equal numbers in business or politics. I would give instances where this is evident, but I will not. Figures show that globally, women's education and health is neglected to a great extent and violence towards women is still worse than that of men.

On International Woman's Day, women across the world come together to force the world to recognise these inequalities, whilst celebrating the achievements of women who have overcome these barriers. I am not sure if we value this day all that much in Swaziland, but we probably should in the future.

Countries celebrate it in different ways. I gathered that it is an official holiday in a number of places including: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China (for women only), Cuba, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Madagascar (for women only), Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nepal (for women only), Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Zambia.

Here are some uplifting quotes to live by, from women...to women.

"If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman." — Margaret Thatcher.

"Feminism isn't about making women strong. Women are already strong. It's about changing the way the world perceives that strength." — G.D. Anderson.

"To all the little girls who are watching, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve your own dreams." — Hillary Clinton in her 2016 concession speech

"Success isn't about the money you make, it is about the difference you make in people's lives." — Michelle Obama, former first lady of the United States.

"On my own I will just create, and if it works, it works, and if it doesn't, I'll create something else. I don't have any limitations on what I think I could do or be." — Oprah Winfrey, American media proprietor.

And my favorite saying... "A woman is like a tea bag; you never know how strong she is until she gets in hot water." — Eleanor Roosevelt.

Analysis & opinion



BY MBONGENI
MBONGO

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Members of Parliament were back at work this past week—earning their money, finally, and not taking from the poor under the disguise that they are working.

In fact, the point has to be made of the irony of the sheepish move by the MPs to throw out a budget they felt did not reflect the wishes of the people being that they themselves are not in touch with the people. This is part of the reasons why it was easy to conclude that their move to throw out a budget was in itself a reflection of how they do not know any better, and are in fact wasting the same taxpayers' money.

This argument can be held in critical context when we consider that at the core of their move is greed; a move calculated to win them political points within their constituencies and the general public. But, this misses the point spectacularly; the public has long concluded that there is nothing that can come out of Parliament and be with reason; that there is nothing that MPs can do without there being an underlying selfish interest; that there is no move from the House that can honestly come through.

All three things were proved right—again. There was only ever going to be one conclusion here; that is the budget was going to go ahead, and that MPs would come back to their senses. Consequently, this would also be significant in that it exposes Members of Parliament as not only being irrational, but out of touch with the real issues, and so inexperienced, or is it political immaturity, in the manner they go about what would probably be some noble thinking.

I say this because it is noble that the MPs want the budget to be in line with the national vision, or for instance, some of the programmes that identify with the real situation on the ground. But the point is not to ground the entire country. The point is also not to be reckless, even if the plan would be to force the hand of the government. It must be silly, to be honest.

And, in politics, timing is everything. So, it means that such a big decision can't be taken whimsically, ignoring how this will be viewed—even when it is so obvious what the perception will be.

It is my view that when legislators are going to act this recklessly, then it leaves without any option but to conclude that this country is in danger if it is left in the hands of such people who are so impulsive they will cut their noses to spite themselves.

The point is that we have been down this route before; MPs have thrown their toys out of the pram so many times—to spectacular futility. They have been yanked not once,



I say this because it is noble that the MPs want the budget to be in line with the national vision, or for instance, some of the programmes that identify with the real situation on the ground. But the point is not to ground the entire country. The point is also not to be reckless, even if the plan would be to force the hand of the government. It must be silly, to be honest.

but twice—as the Speaker of the House is still sitting there, with a smug look on his face every time they try these antics. He is a perfect example of how MPs are not only without teeth, but without guile and direction. He is a perfect reminder that there are certain things MPs must be careful about before they even entertain these in their thoughts. Ultimately, the fact that Themba Msibi is still sitting there as a presiding officer is the proof that they have gone about the antics their wrong way. What then would change with a motion to throw out a budget? What could it achieve really? What would be the curve ball, if any?

The answer is nothing; except that there would be noise, and a lot of frothing; and some nice headlines in the press. The truth is that there would only be one eventuality—the budget goes on, as is—and without their input.

Of course this leads to many other narratives about how Parliament can be or is effective. It can be a good argument for another day what effect legislators can truly have in our governance system, or what their role really is under the *Tinkhundla* system. But for now, the point one can make is that if MPs run so aimlessly into things then there can never be any success from their participation in our governance. I tend to conclude that based on how they handle themselves, or these issues inside the august House it leaves only one conclusion, the calibre of the legislators is wanting, which makes it hard to argue when people

criticise them as being development officers.

This then also makes their contribution to the well being of both our system and people really ineffective, except that we pay over the odds to look after them.

Anyway, the point of today's article is really to moan about how much we have wasted in both this pointless manoeuvre and the entire 10th Parliament, because here we are with one year before we go to the polls and we still have such mundane debates in Parliament. That on its own tells a story; that MPs are hardly going to get their motives right, or that their moves are easily thwarted, or that they shoot so aimlessly even a blind man sees there is nothing to come out of their motions.

Parliament, therefore, are no different to a group of high school boys out on a gravy trip for the first time and mesmerised by all that they can do. If MPs want to score political points, and win another term in Parliament, the least they can do is focus on the job at hand; they need to be realistic and be leaders of their communities. They need to bother themselves to know more than the people they represent. They need to understand better and contribute more than they can criticise.

This is to say, it does not take a rocket scientist to realise how bad our economic situation is, or that the balancing act required to manoeuvre this budget needs everyone to throw in their weight. In fact, although Martin Dlamini's has gaps—and huge ones—the point is not to throw

it out, but to guide how it can be made to work.

Everyone but MPs is realistic about the economic situation. Everyone recognises the risk we are in as a country, and that things are getting difficult. To this end, we can applaud the finance minister for the balancing act, but we can certainly do better in the allocations.

There is a serious problem with our spending, which keeps ballooning out of control; and there is a lack of political will to curbing that spending. We could start with MPs leading by example, cutting out needless spending and foreign trips. They could demand the same of every ministry. Government is being milked dry by external trips and the huge sums being paid out in allowances. As for the social grants, MPs should also ask themselves where the money to finance all these things will come from before shooting from the hip and throwing dreamy figures. If they care that much, they have to find ways to finance their spending—and that of the social grants. This is why it follows that with their latest plan falling apart, and without a plan B of course, it shows how much they still have to learn, and how much this country is being denied sound leadership by their antics.

This is why the Prime Minister reportedly strolled out of Parliament after delivering the news that the budget is going ahead; he walked like an Einstein. And who would blame him—when MPs behave like novices, there can only be one Einstein.



HOW RELEVANT IS OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM TO LABOUR MARKET DEMANDS?

The Voice of Business in Swaziland welcomes with excitement the great news that the University of Swaziland will, from August this year, be offering its very own Master's Degree in Business Administration programme for business leaders in the kingdom. This is a milestone in the history of the university since its establishment in 1982 as it is through such programmes that Swaziland will produce leaders of business that will have the potential to compete in the space of business, which is considered to be the engine of economic growth for our economy.

The competitive business environment that has been marked by globalisation demands that the country employs relevant educational programmes that are responsive to labour market demands in view of the high unemployment rate, currently at 41.8 per cent, in Swaziland.

Talking of unemployment, the Voice of Business is concerned by the current generation of young Swazi graduates leaving the education system which has gone into the labour market with more years of schooling and higher levels of qualifications yet they are struggling to find employment. The country's unemployment statistics obtained from the ministry of labour and social security show that there are about 69 000 discouraged workers in Swaziland from a potential labour force of 295 236. These are people who have since accepted their fate of being unemployed citizens of Swaziland because they have tried in vain to look for a job. A majority of this population are university graduates with diplomas and degrees in various

fields of studies, ranging from Humanities, Law, to Social Sciences, to name a few.

The Voice of Business in Swaziland considers education suitable if the graduates possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to realise their vision and to actively participate and contribute to the country's economy. The person who is provided with that type of education cannot sit by the side unemployed. A proper education system should produce graduates who can be absorbed by the labour market. But the question is: how big is the labour market and what does it needs?

Employer

It is an open secret that the sugar industry is and has for the past years, been the largest employer in the land yet our education system to date cannot offer courses relevant to the sugar industry in Swaziland. The country's education system has continued to produce graduates using a supply driven education system as opposed to demands driven education system.

In His 'Speech from the Throne', His Majesty King Mswati III spoke of the need to realise the full potential of our mining sector as a kingdom that still remains untapped. But the Voice of Business is yet to see a mining course offered by the country's tertiary institutions.

According to the Global Competitiveness Report Index, 2015-

16, the country's quality of education is ranked at 50 per cent, meaning there is still more that should be done to improve this average ranking. In Africa, the University of Swaziland is currently ranked 84 out of 200 universities, behind the University of Cape Town, University of South Africa and University of Pretoria, all of which are occupying the top three rankings.

Compared with its regional counterparts in the SADC region, Swaziland has the second highest unemployment rate which currently sits at 28.1 per cent.

This is indicative of the fact that the Swazi education sector is not adequately responsive to labour markets and development needs. There seems to be no clear mechanism for monitoring sub-regional labour markets in which Swazi graduates could compete for jobs. It is the view of the Voice of

Business that if tertiary institutions would have more employers and industry representation in the various education Councils, the issue of relevance of the courses they offer could be addressed.

We all know that a country's manpower resources are an integral part of its wealth. We say so on many occasions, especially when addressing young people during graduation ceremonies, or in political speeches. Unfortunately, when it comes to following these words with action and giving education the relevance and the funding it deserves, we all too often fall short. This is something we have to change as a country. The skills and qualifications gained at university should help us build our lives and secure our societies' prosperity, competitiveness and progress.

The country's education system needs to stop trying to predict the future, but

it should align and prepare young people for the change they will experience in the labour market. Tertiary institutions need to stop preparing young people for the jobs that existed a generation ago and start preparing them for jobs that will unleash the opportunities that the country has to improve its economy. For example, entrepreneurship education is much more important now than it was a generation ago because it teaches those skills and personal attributes which oil the modern labour market.

Students

The country should be able to attract international students who would like to enrol for courses they deem competitive in our national universities as opposed to sending students abroad for courses we should be offering as a country.

For example, it is embarrassing for us as a nation that we do not have courses in our tertiary institutions that will enable our young graduates to fully participate in the mining sector; courses such as excavator training.

It is critical that the Voice of Business in Swaziland, therefore, states that if the current, not particularly favourable, educational system is left unchanged, Swaziland will fail to fully embrace the opportunity of building a knowledge-based and skilled-based economy which is a basis for economic growth and, consequently, improvement of the standard of living of the citizens.

Why is South Africa still so anti-black, so many years after apartheid?

In 1994, *Shoshozola* became the unofficial anthem of South Africa's "miracle" transition into democracy. Taking its title from the Ndebele word for "going forward," it was a song expressing the hardship of the lives of migrant labourers from what was then Rhodesia, who travelled on steam trains to work in South Africa's mines.

Today it has a painful irony as migrants find themselves no longer welcome in post-apartheid South Africa.

A recent spate of violent attacks led to an anti-xenophobia protest on 9 March. About 200 locals and foreigners, under the banner of the Coalition of Civics against Xenophobia, took to the streets of Pretoria, calling for an end to the violence against foreign-born Africans and South Asians in South Africa's townships and inner cities.

Having been born in Zimbabwe and lived in South Africa for as long as it has been a democracy, I was as warmed by the solidarity as I was upset by the violence. I am reassured, especially to see reports of the march acknowledge that "issues

of unemployment, housing and crime are central" to the attacks.

Understanding and acknowledging the root causes of the violence has been largely missing from the public discourse here in South Africa. Too often the attackers have been dismissed as "irrational", or provoked calls for more "hospitality that defines our democratic order", in the words of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Both reactions seem to miss two key facts: South Africa isn't anti-immigrant, it's anti-black, and this violence is evidence that the "miracle" has failed the very people it should have uplifted - poor black South Africans.

Violence

Explaining why the violence is specifically anti-black or Afrophobic, the University of South Africa Professor Rodney Tshaka described xenophobia as the fear of the other, while "Afrophobia is fear of a specific other: the black other from north of the Limpopo river [in other words, from Zimbabwe or Mozambique and beyond them, the rest of Africa]."

If foreigners generally were the

main target, those who are anti-foreigner would no doubt have sought out all foreigners and made it known that they are not welcome in this country." The fact that Africans bear the brunt of the violence isn't simply about the numbers, though over 75% of international migrants living in South Africa come from the rest of the continent. Foreignness, or the notion of "other", has a long, anti-black history in South Africa. Until 1994's elections, black South Africans were not citizens of South Africa, but of "homelands" or "Bantustans," areas where the black population was resettled under apartheid.

The South Africa of postcards was the preserve of the white settler minority, who did not see themselves as part of the African continent.

Xenophobia

Dismissing the attacks as "common township thuggery" or having "nothing to do with xenophobia" also ignores the fact that the post-apartheid dispensation has yet to deliver economic justice for black South Africans.

A black-led government presides

over an economy that is white-dominated, and which frequently ranks among the most unequal in the world. Economic inequality is said to have exploded after the end of apartheid, with the wealth of the top 10% growing by 64% in the first 17 years while the poorest 10% have seen no financial growth at all. It is not insignificant that the recent violence comes at a time when calls for "radical economic transformation," which specifically includes land redistribution, have grown louder from factions within the ANC and opposition parties such as the Economic Freedom Fighters.

The accusation that (black) foreigners are stealing South African jobs also ignores the long history of regional migrant labour, predominantly from Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

My family became a part of that history when we emigrated from Harare in Zimbabwe to Umlazi, a township outside Durban. My father, like many other doctors from Zimbabwe, was recruited to staff South Africa's public hospitals under the structural adjustment programmes of the 90s. After the turn

of the millennium we moved to Polokwane, 200km from Beitbridge, the busiest border post on the continent.

Although my classmates would call me "*lekwerikwere*" (a pejorative term for black foreigners), I knew even then that we were different from the so-called border jumpers, the thousands of informal, hospitality and agricultural sector workers who fled Zimbabwe's economic collapse.

Though I am often made aware of my foreignness, I - like many other foreign-born nationals with "good papers" - have not experienced the same degree of physical vulnerability as other Africans living in the townships and inner cities because I have been insulated by my class. South Africa is a hostile place for the poor and working class, but economic migrants will continue to come, attracted by the opportunities made possible by democratic government, good infrastructure and economic stability. Still, without social justice and a radical economic transformation that includes land redistribution, the promise of South Africa's "miracle" will become increasingly untenable. **Panashe Chigumadzi**

MIND THAT ERROR

ADIDI UYO



One thing we can say about syntax is that the longer our sentences are, the greater the probability that they will contain one or more prepositions. Could this syntactic fact also account for the preponderance of the error of faulty preposition in the sentences that make up many messages we find in newspapers?

INFORMATION IS POWER is the title of an opinion piece in the Sunday Observer of June 28, 2015. Read its first paragraph and check how many prepositions each of its sentences contain; then, see if any of the sentences has a faulty preposition.

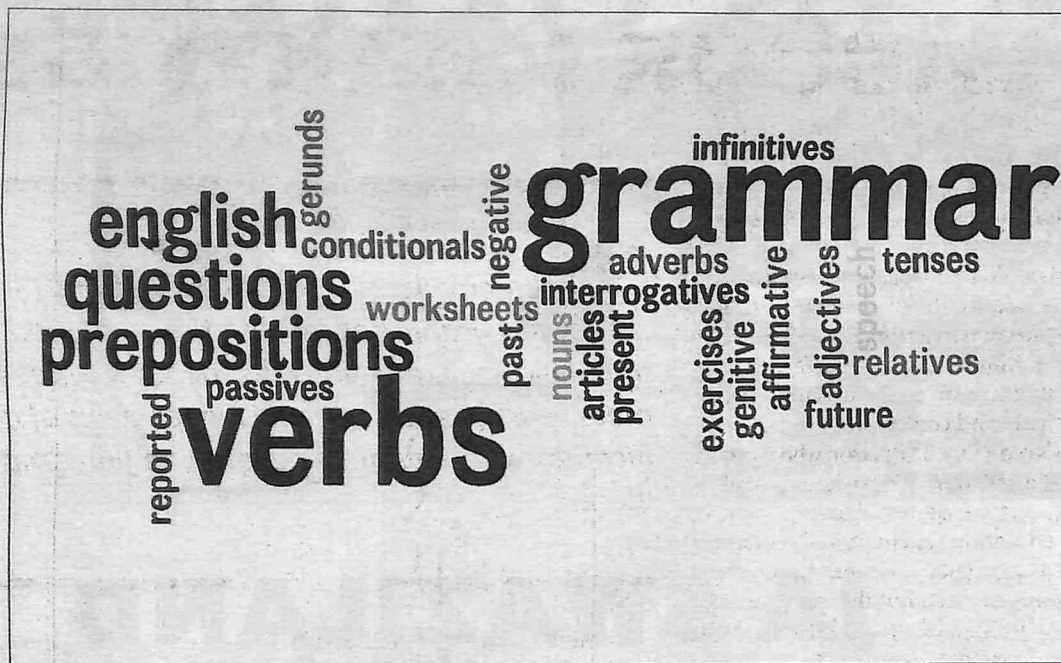
"I am fortunate to have access to a few video recordings of King Sobhuza II, when he was addressing the nation after independence. On two of those speeches, he speaks of a wish for us, Swazis, to get first hand (sic) information about what is going in the rest of the world, hoping that this may lead us appreciate what we have here."

In the first sentence of that paragraph, we find three prepositions. There is the preposition, "to," which occurs twice, and there is "after." And none is used wrongly. But the case is different with the second sentence. It's very first word, "on," is a preposition, and it is faulty. The correct preposition should be "in": "In two of those speeches..."

The second editorial of the Times of Swaziland, July 6, 2015, was titled, PRISON FAILED TO BREAK ME - THULANI. Check out the state of the prepositions in the closing paragraph of the editorial: "Equally, their release in jail after spending two years could be viewed as a good effort that the country does want to conform to calls for fair justice."

Whether there is anything like "fair justice" or not is moot; but there is no doubt that the first preposition in that sentence, "in," is error. The correct preposition should be "from": "...their release from jail after spending two years..." "Nzimande's wrong about print media" is the title of a commentary in The Star of July 6, 2015. The last sentence of the seventh paragraph of the piece reads, thus: "It is very hard to know who gets the least favourable coverage between the ANC, the EFF and the DA, to take the biggest three parties." For sure, the preposition under watch in that sentence is "between," perhaps one of the most perplexing prepositions in the English lexicon. Traditional grammar teaches us that the right preposition that we should use when two entities or items are involved in a par-

PERPLEXING PREPOSITIONS, MORE OR LESS



ticular case is "between." But when the entities or items are more than two, the correct preposition that we should use is "among."

Because the writer is talking about three political parties, "between" is therefore the wrong preposition to use. But don't say I told you this: Some knowledgeable writers do use "between" when talking about three, or even more, entities or items. Oh, yeah, I have caught such a "misuse" of the preposition in one or two speeches by First World leaders, even - but I loathe naming names here!

Methinks the sentence looks and sounds much better, if we revise it according to what traditional or prescriptive grammar teaches us, thus: "It is very hard to know who gets the least favourable coverage among the ANC, the EFF and the DA, to take the biggest three parties." Here comes "between," again! "Former union boss Zwelinzima Vavi has spilt the beans on how President Jacob Zuma orchestrated a secret business meeting" between his son Duduzane, a Gupta brother and Teodoro Obian Nguema Mbasogo, the president of Equatorial

Guinea." This is the lead of a news story in the Sunday Times of March 27, 2016, with the headline, "Vavi reveals Zuma aid for Duduzane, Gupta."

The same rule dictates that instead of "between," we should use "among": The secret business meeting which President Zuma orchestrated was "among his son Duduzane, a Gupta brother and Teodoro Obian Nguema Mbasogo, the president of Equatorial Guinea," not between the three persons.

We cannot overstate the logic behind the use of "among," instead of "between," when the entities or items involved are more than two. Granted that a picture is worth more than a thousand words, let us ask you to hold up three of your fingers. Now, pick up a pen and try to put it between the three fingers you have held up; then, write with the pen. See, how does it hold up? Take that for a QED!

Here is a faulty preposition that is less perplexing, seemingly. In the Swazi Observer of July 14, 2015 was a rather odd news story with the headline, "Man has sex with a pig." The lead of the story read,

thus: "A 20-year old man was arrested for having sex with a pig which he had found tied on a pole by the owner." Gee!

Asked to choose between "on" and "to," which of the two would you say is the correct preposition? You see, it is one thing to make the pig lie "on" a pole, assuming that was possible, for the man to perpetrate his act. But to "tie" a pig "on" a pole is something else, although it is physically possible, too! Corrected version: "A 20-year old man was arrested for having sex with a pig which he had found tied to a pole by the owner."

If only we could swap the faulty preposition in the foregoing sentence for what we have here! An article in the Swazi Observer of August 27, 2014 was titled, THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP TO BUSINESS. Hmm: the influence of leadership "to" business?

Certainly, the preposition, "to," is the wrong one to use in that headline. Some may quibble over the prepositions, "on," and "upon." Either is better than "to." But the preposition, "on," is the correct choice.

One cannot say with the same audacity what the correct choice of preposition should be in the next case we want to present. WHY EMASWATI WOULD ENJOY DIGITAL MIGRATION DIVIDENDS is the headline of a commentary in the Times of Swaziland, July 13, 2015.

The second paragraph of the piece reads, thus: "And before going any further on the subject of digital migration, whose deadline set by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) in 2006 this country and a host of other (sic) in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and beyond missed successfully, I am hopeful that this would be my last word on the subject."

The question that arises from that sentence is: "Do we go further 'on' a subject or 'into' a subject?" In other words, is the preposition, "on," in the sentence right or wrong? The jury is out, but if I were to choose one, I would pick "into." For me, the phrase is like "delving into." We do not delve "on" on a subject, but we delve "into" it. Quite perplexing, need we say!

How about this faulty preposition: Do you find it more or less perplexing than the others? "According to a joint press statement issued by the parties on the negotiating table yesterday, their negotiations have been give 10 working days to conclude." This is the second sentence in a news story in the Swazi Observer of April 15, 2016. The story was headlined, BUMPER PAY FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS THIS MONTH.

If you ask me, I would say that the preposition in question in that sentence makes one feel that parties to a negotiation actually sit "on" a table, instead of "on" chairs, while they are negotiating. No doubt, "on" is a faulty preposition, for we do not find the negotiators on the table. Instead, they sit at a table.

Celebrate Women's Month with a little help from Dups



Happy Women's Month to all womenfolk! Dups joins the world in commemorating this special month.

International Women's Day is a worldwide event that celebrates women's achievements while calling for gender equality.

The running theme for this year is 'Be bold for change', and it is a message that we hope will resonate with fellow Swazis.

This being the month of celebrating women, Dups would like to remind you that you can still celebrate even the impor-

tant women in our lives who are no longer with us. This could be mothers, sisters, wives, grandmothers, or any other relations.

We do not stop caring for people because they have passed on. Dups Funeral Home can help you carve the memories of departed significant women in stone. All you have to do is send sms or WhatsApp to 7602 6417 to give us your specifications for a tombstone, as well as get a quotation.

Easier

Speaking of tombstones, we also have the Tribute Cover Plan, which makes it easier for the policy holder to get a tombstone for him/herself, and/or celebrate the life of the departed in any way they see fit. The Tribute Cover Plan pays out cash to the nominated beneficiary to enable them put up a memorial in the form of a tombstone or statue for the

policy holder and his/her spouse upon their death.

The plan can be taken for an individual policy holder or the policy holder and his/her spouse.

This benefit can be accessed from three-months after the death of the policy holder or his/her spouse.

Apart from tombstones, you could also consider taking up a policy for the important people in your life. Gone are the days when only men were responsible for making the big decisions. As a woman you can also take up a funeral policy to cover you and your loved ones.

Taking up a policy is an act of selflessness and love, and these are some of the qualities that most women are associated with. A funeral policy eases the emotional and financial burden of funding a funeral. The policy that is hot right now is the Dignified Family Funeral

Plan.

We are currently running a promotion whereby those that take up that funeral plan with an E50 000 cover stand to win a cruise for two. Furthermore, the cover comes with many outstanding benefits. The promotion runs up to June 30.

Support

At Dups there is no limit to how much you can show your love for your family. Following your demise, your family is still capable of feeling your affection with the Dignified Family Support Plan. This product will ensure that the family is cushioned financially between death of the policy holder and the winding up of his/her estate.

You might not be physically there as a mother someday, but your presence can still be felt from the provisions that you make while you are still here. The Dignified Family Support Plan covers the main policy holder only and the payout will be disbursed to a nominated

beneficiary.

This year's commemoration comes against the backdrop of many women losing their lives at the hands of their significant others and sometimes total strangers who take advantage of the vulnerability of women. We hope our men folk will take time to reflect on the value of women and take the necessary steps to protect them from danger rather than be the perpetrators. We also encourage women to value the sanctity of life as there have been women who unleash acts of violence on fellow women, men and helpless children.

To find out more about the policies discussed today, please call us on 2505 2028 to find out more about. You can also pay us a visit at our offices in Manzini, Matata, Matsapha, Simunye, Nhlanguano, Mbabane, Pigg's Peak and Siteki. Alternatively, you can send queries to info@dupsgroup.com, www.facebook.com/dups or on Twitter @dupsinsurance.



**NOKUKHANY
A GAMEDZE**

JA BOARD CHAIR

I have often been concerned when we speak of youth unemployment statistics, especially when it comes to skilled youth who have made the effort to gain the needed skills to solicit employment.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), young people are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults and almost 73 million youth (about 40% of the global labour force) are seeking employment opportunities. Most young people, especially in the developing countries like Swaziland, face little prospect of obtaining employment in the formal sector. Our tertiary institutions are not able to absorb many young people completing high school and even those who complete tertiary education, are hardly absorbed into the labour force, this then continuously add to the ever-increasing rate of youth unemployment.

According to the Commonwealth Alliance on Youth Entrepreneurship (CAYE),

JA SWAZILAND PARTNERS WITH MTN FOUNDATION

...to introduce entrepreneurship to vocational skills training



self-employment / entrepreneurship is an extremely viable alternative to traditional formal employment pathways for many young people. However, this often requires a radical mental shift, especially in Africa, where entrepreneurship can be perceived as the domain of those who miss out on formal education and employment.

This, however, is a slowly changing perception as cases of successful young entrepreneurs continue to grow. In this regard, JAS established the Out of School Youth (OOSY) programme that focus on building entrepreneurship capacity among young people post high school education. JA Swaziland has therefore partnered with MTN Swaziland to

form a programme that will turn vocational institutions trainees into self-sustained entrepreneurs.

This programme seeks to empower young people attending vocational training to use their acquired skills to pursue self-employment and further employ other young people. The successes of this programme will in the long run further help to broaden

the SMEs base, which is a backbone of a vibrant economy. The Swaziland Skills Centres have been engaged to enroll their students in this programme.

The Swaziland Skills Centres (SSC) consists of three training centers – Manzini Industrial Training Centre (MITC), Siteki Industrial Training Centre (SITC) and Nhlangu Training Centre (NITC) - and train young people aged 18 - 35 in a vocational skill of their choice which will enable them to start their own businesses or be gainfully employed. It has been observed that as employment opportunities in the formal sector shrink, the acquisition of business management and entrepreneurial skills for self-employment becomes a major imperative in the design of vocational training programmes.

Junior Achievement Swaziland (JAS) will come in as the skilled partner in youth entrepreneurship issues. The youth will be taken through a nine days training course of deliberating on the concept of entrepreneurship where business plans will be developed in preparing the youth to get started in business. All the components needed to put in place a business ventures will be

PESTS AND GRAIN STORAGE

Correct farming techniques do not start and end on the field. What we do after harvesting our grain is equally as important as soil testing, liming and any other farming technique we can fathom.

Quality grain yields are the desired end result and they are what give meaning to all the resources put into farming from day one; be it monetary resources, time, inputs, etc.

NMC's Farmer Development Officers have come out to talk to us about things to look out for during storage, particularly pests. Here's what they have to say:

Storage Pests

The greatest damage to stored maize grain is generally caused by insects, although this may be exceeded by rodents in some cases. Maize storage insect pests fall under two main categories:

Primary pests: These are able to feed on whole, healthy and well-stored maize grains.

Secondary pests: These can only attack broken grain, moist and thus soft grain; grain damaged by primary pests or processed products like flour.

Generally, the primary and secondary pests of stored maize grains are found in two orders:

- Lepidoptera (grain moths)

- Coleoptera (beetles and weevils).

Maize Weevil (*Sitophilus zeamais*) (*Ingobolwane*)

It is a cylindrical black-brown insect of three - four mm length, with a well defined snout, and an elbowed and clubbed antennae.

The overall life cycle takes 24-60 days depending on temperature and humidity. Eggs are deposited within the grains where the larva and pupa stages are completed. It is a primary pest and damage is caused by adult feeding and larvae tunneling within the grains.

Larger Grain Borer or LGB (*Prostephanus truncatus*) (*Sihlawa*)

The LGB, also known as Greater Grain Borer, can bore and live in wood, and on maize. It is cylindrical,

dark brown and three - five mm in length. Its elytra are apically flattened and look like cut off.

Its life cycle takes about 27 days under favorable conditions. Its infestation can occur both in the field and in storage. It is a primary pest and damage is by both adults and larvae. The beetle feeds on the most nutritious part of the maize kernel that is endosperm.

Lesser Grain Borer (*Rhyzopertha dominica*) (*Sihlawa*)

This insect is about two - three mm long, dark red-brown with a body that is more rounded at the end and narrows than that of the Larger Grain Borer.

Sources of Insect Infestation

• Cross infestation from neigh-

**NOKWANDA
DLAMINI-
MASUKU**

ON THE
GRAIN

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discussed with these young people in the training, getting them ready to start their various businesses of choice.

As these young people are trained, they are given practical exercises that will ensure they implement the theoretical training and train to start. After completion of the nine days training, the young people get business mentors who will guide them through the process of starting up the business. This is where the concepts of registration, taxation as well as savings are discussed and through the guidance of the mentor, young people integrate these elements into their businesses. Monthly business lectures also become vital in addressing certain areas of business that young people tend to find difficult while in the process of establishing an enterprise.

MTN Swaziland has allocated resources amounting to E300 000 that will cater for the training of 60 youth from the three vocational facilities. A sum of E50 000 has been set aside for this project to be utilised as startup capital for five best performing students after the completion of the programme. Each learner will be presented with a E10 000 worth startup kit for the intended business venture. This has been introduced in this programme in order to motivate the young people to set their minds towards performing at their level best towards establishing real enterprises upon completion of the programme. It is also a step towards averting one of the major problems which young people face when setting up enterprises which is lack of financing needed to gather the tools needed to get started in business.

While this sum of money may not be enough to cater for all the needs of these young people, it is a step towards a positive direction that JA Swaziland seeks to approach whereby our institution can be better positioned to provide financial assistance to our graduates. It is still a long way towards accomplishing this goal, however we are pleased to see our partners such as MTN joining forces with JA Swaziland in filling in the gaps that exist in making young people entrepreneurs.

After completion of this programme, we seek to have harnessed the skills that the vocational institutions provide to these young people into real enterprises that will employ more youth. We also seek to provide opportunities to young people where they dream beyond employment and see the value of becoming their own employer. In the long run, JA Swaziland wishes to become a feeder of the SME base in Swaziland who will directly invest to the positive turnover of our economy.



Nestling between South Africa and Mozambique, the small landlocked kingdom of Swaziland is often overlooked by tourists, but has a surprising amount of attractions and activities to offer, writes English writer Trevor Claringbold in his travel memoirs posted on www.simon-seeks.com.

Trevor has been a travel writer, broadcaster, and photographer for over 30 years, and had nothing but amazing stories to tell about his maiden trip to Swaziland. He continues:

"A relatively small, landlocked kingdom, between South Africa and Mozambique, Swaziland has a wealth of attractions crammed into its diverse countryside. It's often included as a brief stopover on tours in this part of Africa, but I was keen to spend some time and explore it in more detail.

I had booked a room for part of my stay at the delightful Foresters Arms Hotel, a short drive southwest of the capital, Mbabane. I hired a car on arrival, and planned my week using the excellent road network. Mbabane itself is not particularly inspiring, although quite pretty and with some reasonable shopping centres. I enjoyed a brief wander around, and took the chance to visit the local markets, with all manner of tourist-orientated handicrafts.

Wonderful

However, the hills in the background kept reminding me I needed to head south to my hotel in Mhlambanyatsi. Even though the sun was beginning to set, it was clear the countryside outside the capital was wonderful. I arrived at dusk, and was extremely pleased at the standard of the accommodation.

The water here is directly from a fresh spring, and the rooms and public areas were suitably comfortable.

The next morning I sat on the open-air terrace, and had trouble working out which was better: the superb panoramic view, or the exquisite food! I had planned to see the country by driving circular tours from here, and my first was north to the Hhohho region. My route took me via Motjane, and the Hawane Dam, to the highest part of Swaziland. This is a stunning landscape of mountains, tinged in red from the iron



TOURISM & TRAVEL

BY BONGANI DLAMINI
STA Marketing Manager
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VETERAN ENGLISH TRAVEL WRITER WOWED BY SWAZILAND

...and vows to come back



ore that has been mined here since ancient times.

The Malolotja National Park is a rugged natural wilderness, where large groups of antelope run, and there are apparently more than 200 different species of birds. There are a variety of marked treks, including one I took to the stunning gorge cut by the Komati River. The river then continues on to the huge Maguga Dam, where I stopped briefly on my way to Pigg's Peak. If you were dropped into this place blindfolded, you could be forgiven for thinking you were in Canada or Alaska, as it is home to a busy logging industry.

Vast tracts of pine trees cover the surrounding hills, and huge trucks carry the cut timber along rutted dusty roads.

To increase the similarity, Pigg's Peak gets its name from a prospector who discovered gold here in 1884. Don't be fooled by its outwardly industrial aura; this is a tourist town, pretty in the centre, and with more than enough craft shops along all the main roads.

The main highlight is just to the north, where I found the picturesque Phophonyane Falls.

The drive back south was equally magnificent, with the setting sun casting deep shadows on the mountains, and the amazing chorus of night creatures that is a feature of

sunsets throughout Africa.

The next day I planned a much shorter drive, visiting the area closest to the hotel around the Ezulwini Valley. Roughly translated this means 'Valley of Heaven' and certainly it was full of heavenly views. I wanted to visit the wildlife sanctuary at Mlilwane, which, although being created artificially back in the 1950s, has an impressive array of animals and birds. I joined a small, guided horseback tour, which, even with the admission fee for the sanctuary itself added in, was still surprisingly cheap.

We saw hippos, crocodiles, warthogs, antelopes, giraffes, and lots of zebra. Above me, I also spotted a black eagle and many smaller, prettier species. It was a wonderful trip, enhanced by a superb meal at Malandela's Restaurant, in the Malkerns Valley.

My final trip out was to the Lubombo region, which occupies the eastern areas near the border with Mozambique. This is too far to do in a day, and there is also too much to see, so I planned to stay there. My first stop was the historic small town of Siteki, which sits high on a hill from where, I'm told, on a clear day you can see the Indian Ocean. Sadly it wasn't clear enough on the day I was there. I enjoyed the vibrancy of Siteki after the more relaxed, laid-back atmosphere that I'd encountered elsewhere.

tered elsewhere.

A drive south through more beautiful rolling countryside, found me at Big Bend, where the Great Usuthu River has a big bend. The craft centre here is pretty typical, but no less interesting for that. I always prefer craft markets where you can actually see the items being made. I was also in a particularly good frame of mind, after a very acceptable meal in the Riverside Restaurant, and because I was now heading for what I had planned as the highlight of my visit to Swaziland.

Well-organised

The Mkhaya Game Reserve, near Siphofaneni, is a real first-class reserve: well-organised, well-stocked, and very friendly. If you are planning to come here, you must book in advance. I'd reserved one of the wonderfully atmospheric 19th-century-style stone cottages in the middle of the bush. Staying in the reserve not only gives you the authentic feel of the wild, it was also much more convenient for the morning game drive. As well as elephants, white rhino, antelopes, and a host of smaller breeds, I was delighted to see my first-ever black rhino in the wild.

I would have come to Swaziland just for that one moment, but in truth I had been more than pleasantly surprised at this amazing country, and vowed to return one day to explore further."

bouring lots of stores

- Migration from waste or rubbish.
- Hiding places in stores e.g. cracks.
- Use of infested bags.
- Introduction of infested lots.

A high rate of reproduction and short development period enables insects to cause important damage by rapidly developing from a small number of individual insects to a large mass. There are genetic differences among maize varieties with regard to resistance to storage pests. So, where possible, farmers should select varieties with less susceptibility to storage pests.

Conditions favoring insect pest attack

Insect pest populations in stored maize are influenced by availability of food, relative humidity, temperature and moisture content of the grains. Temperatures of 27°C to 31 °C are optimal for development of pests of stored maize grains. At temperatures below 14°C and above 42°C development generally does not take place. Most stor-

age pests die at temperatures below 5°C and above 45°C. Swaziland's equable climate and favourable temperatures throughout the year favours rapid development of insects.

The optimum relative humidity for most storage maize pests lies at around 70%, the minimum being 25-40% and the maximum 80-100%. Very few species are able to survive in extremely dry conditions.

Storage pests for maize grains are not able to develop quickly or breed successfully in very dry conditions. Their rates of development below 11.5% moisture content are distinctly slower, and at moisture contents below 8% many fail to breed at all. Moisture contents of 12-18% favour rapid increase, especially in suitable temperature and relative humidity conditions. Moisture contents of maize in store should be below 12.5%. With insufficient drying, the grain is usually extremely satisfactory for insect breeding. In addition to these factors, poor storage hygiene and the presence of old stock encourage early infestation of

the new stock.

Losses due to insect infestation

- Loss of weight to the grain due to feeding
- Loss in quality due to:
- Impurities like droppings, cocoons and parts of insects, which may also lead to microbial infestation as a result of increased temperature and moisture,
- Reduction of nutritional value,
- Reduction in germination ability for seeds.
- Creating localised hot spots within the grain that may initiate wet heating, causing stack collapse due to weakening of bag fibre.
- Processing machinery may be blocked by webbing, and at times milling machinery may be totally damaged.

Thieves

Thieves reduce the quality of maize grain and in extreme cases; losses can go up to 100%. Losses due to theft can occur both in the field and in

storage. Farmers are advised to cater for this increasing challenge and devise some strategies to deal with it. One way of preventing or controlling this risk is to reduce periods of storage by disposing off the grain as quickly as possible.

Mite

Mite infestation normally occurs in mouldy grains where they feed on the fungi. Occasionally they are predators of some insect pests. Their presence leads to the contamination of grains leading to off flavours.

For more information on maize or grain related pests and any other information related to maize or grain farming, please feel free to contact the NMC marketing department of the Farmer Development Division.

We would also appreciate your feedback on the issues tackled in our weekly articles either directly to NMC or via the Sunday Observer. Until next week, take care of your grain and stay blessed.



BY Comfort Mabuba

ELECTIONS ARE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS TOO

● *Rights to vote must not be taken lightly and misused*

A fortnight ago I got so disturbed by comments said to have been made by one Ncumbi Maziya, who is a leading Commissioner of the Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC).

If the outbursts alluded to him are true then we certainly not having voter education but indirect campaigning individuals prematurely. Praising the Co. rectional Services Commissioner General, Mzuthini Ntshangase is in bad taste and playing dangerous politicking games. It is not on and against the principles of fair play, impartiality and voter education process. Ntshangase needs no support from anybody as he has distinguishedly served Swaziland and should not have his name tarnished and reputation dented. Promoting an individual is against the very electoral Act. Let us see fair play and true voter education please. I hope EBC will just stick to your mandate, and you will save us a lot of stress. We do not need this.

EBC MANDATE

This is the fourth year of the present Parliament life's span and in between elections, EBC main's mandate is to conduct civic voter education to the citizenry. It is therefore regrettable to hear the very EBC praising people prematurely in their national voter education programme. While it is unfortunate that they have to wait till the eleventh hour to awake from their sleep, we still want to applaud them for smelling the coffee.

We certainly do not want to see the whole EBC only waking up only when we are approaching the elections next year. They should be answering the question, what have they been doing all along to justify the budget they have at their disposal? We have local government elections coming in the next few months and their role has not been made clear at that level. Elections are fundamental human rights and cannot be taken lightly.

Democracy is an expensive commodity that should be jealously guarded. It's about people voices at the ballot boxes and such rights are so precious fundamental freedoms of choosing worthy leadership through transparent means. Elections by nature are people's rights related matters and EBC know that - *Kwebantfu*. Respecting people's right is all that matters in this noble exercise.

DEMOCRACY IS PART OF HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA

The undeniable fact is that the country's constitution is very clear that Swaziland is founded on the democratic system of government. Section 79 embraces these principles so well.

If EBC is truthful to its mandate, it should have embarked on civic education to share the ideals of democracy and this cannot be done by its secret. Democracy principles and all embrace

ing, and cannot be left at the hands of few individuals who only wake up to action when approaching election year. Emphasis of democratic principles is that of devolution of state power from the central government to community based constituencies. This is the crux of the matter I think that EBC should be seen promoting and not remaining silent years between elections. Voter education that does not instill democratic principles is nothing else but propaganda. Citizens must see the value of democracy - 'elethu', it's all about people voices and collective bargaining power. Democracy is a preferred system of government where people can make their voices known as their fundamental rights of choosing representatives and should be taken seriously.

ELECTIONS AS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS TO BE HEARD

Democratic principles are founded on the core foundation that people's voices matters and therefore should be listened to. They should be involved on governance issues as people feel more secured to be led by people who have a mandate. Their preferred candidates represents their wishes and aspirations, hence the need to publicly debate their performance while in office. Such debates are healthy and we should not be ashamed to openly discuss the manner a country is governed. In any thriving democratic order, people engage on governance issues without fear and undue manipulation by those in power.

People's rights to be heard is not to be seen manipulated by a chosen few and this tends to strengthen leadership by putting in checks and balances. We should not be made guilty to question politicians' conduct and how their behaviour impacts the wellbeing of the people. Let people express themselves and be heard, after all this their indelible right to be heard.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO REPRESENTATION

The 8th March yearly is the International Day for Women and the world celebrates this day with fanfare, but certainly everyday should be a women's day because of the weight they carry on their shoulders. Women have been belittled and supported so they should arise to their

Democratic principles are founded on the core foundation that people's voices matters and therefore should be listened to. They should be involved on governance issues as people feel more secured to be led by people who have a mandate.

positions and lead.

We should be extremely worried that we are not recognising the voice of women as we should. It should be paining us deeply to see the constitution being violated and nobody seem to care that women's representation in the august House is not appreciated and in the spirit of the Constitution currently. Initially there is a provision to appoint or vote for four women representing the regions in case the numbers are not convincing in Parliament after elections. What the honourable ones did was to hide their heads in the sand like an ostrich and claim there was no legislation to warrant such appointments.

We should be ashamed of ourselves of failing women of Swaziland when we had all the opportunity to right the wrongs. EBC, as a matter of urgency, should be addressing this abnormality and ensure that not only women are voted for but that mechanisms are put in place to ensure they are elevated to the august House.

Voter education should be encouraging women to vote for other women even the more. And we should not apologise for such a stand as women's rights are human rights too. They should be seen enjoyed when sisters can fight their battles on behalf of other sisters. *Phez'ukomkhono!*

2013 ELECTIONS REPORT

If we were to be very critical of EBC's performance, we should have long demanded that the last elections' report should have long been made public and its findings shared to the populace.

It should be a great shame that they are not seen running in full speed when this very important document

has not been engaged or made public. Where is the report EBC and should we really be demanding what is constitutionally supposed to be a given?

It is within the electorate to be well informed about the findings' and compiled report without sweat. It will be folly to deny that we, the electorate, feel we have been let down and to continue to draw salaries when such an important document has not been availed to us should be indicative of failure to deliver on your mandate.

We want to utilise this document for empowering citizens and the failure to access this makes our work harder in preparing people for next year. Voter education should reflect deeply on the results of the past elections as well as the challenges that were witnessed. It is within the rights of the citizens to access this information without delay.

Prove me wrong by making this document public and I will put my head on the block, there might have been serious challenges witnessed during the last elections.

Oh how one wishes we could respect the principles of respecting citizens' rights to know. We are always depended on international organisations such reports that have a bearing on national elections when we have EBC tasked with such a mandate. Are people not sleeping on their job?

ALLOW NGO'S TO DELIVER ON VOTER EDUCATION

We have become accustomed with the reality that government institutions have always been found wanting in delivery of services and mandates without being assisted by NGOs. Maybe it's high time that government consider involving NGOs with skills and competences to deliver on voter education. We should not be held captive of empowering citizens on their constitutional rights and privileges. Can we not wait till the last minute to have this work done by NGOs please? Experience has since taught us that NGOs can deliver and if there can be an agreed curriculum, in line with voter education to ensure that citizens rights are respected to claim what rightfully is theirs by being Swazis.

It takes a village to bring an elephant home - Give NGOs the chance to deliver. *Asibambisaneni bakaNgwane!*



JOY NDWANDWE'S ZONE LEADERSHIP

Proserpina Dhlamini-Fisher, LaMshini, fondly known as Pros, a woman in the changing world of work, we celebrate her trailblazing international education legacy. All children and grandchildren of the late Babe Mshini Dhlamini and Make LaShongwe are my family.

However, Pros and I got close during my university gap year, whilst working at Swaziland Commercial Board. My cousin Jane Dlamini and Pros would visit my late brother-in-law and colleague Mthulisi Dhlamini at Commercial Board. Then we took out for lunch, this is when the bond began, they were students at Waterford KaMhlaba. Our relationship was solidified when I returned to university, and they found me the leading party lady, the people's person. And if you wanted to party or dates, you stick with me and I will connect you, this sisterhood blossomed into a lifetime bond that has survived turbulences.

Family Background

One invaluable lesson learnt in my 54 years going on 55 years this September, is how there are two types of family relationships, members of genetic pool or members of your soul matrix. The late Babe Mshini was a disciplinarian, like my grandfather, whilst Make LaShongwe was the sweetheart, like my grandmother, hence I found comfort in their home. Today I share with you that Pros, had the best of both worlds, discipline and comfort zone, which has contributed immensely to her success. The Christian base was also a significant part of the discipline and comfort zone in her home. I recall once we were rushing to a party, could not leave the house without a prayer even though we were escorted by my uncle. This is what affirmed Proserpina's success, who is now trailblazing internationally, as she can party hard whilst rooted in Christianity, discipline and comfort zone of her family.

The international space was always in her destiny as Pros, took her diplomatic exposure and upbringing seriously, such that for the longest time she scared people with her accent. Her father's diplomatic service rooted her being an international space cadet, her father enrolled her at Waterford KaMhlaba. This school resonated with Pros whilst affirming her international acumen as a teenager, who yearned and wished to participate in this space. However, her family also grounded her by ensuring she came to study at the University of Swaziland. The best learning curve for interacting with diverse students from within this country, and Pros integrated successfully. She got on with the programme on learning about her Swazi people, whilst detoxing the Waterford snobbishness. As this did not work at Kwaluseni and Luyengo Campus, where you learnt to be humble and firm, as a woman and most significantly as a Swazi. Fortunately there were lots of foreign students, such that campus was not really landlocked, but a robust international learning and intellectual space.

When I was expelled from Swaziland by Ligoqo studying in Botswana, she had a place in my little room, then I was hip and happening within the Botswana campus. Leading the most organised student resource mobilisation for parties group 'Together' as treasurer. During my holidays and whilst visiting each other's homes, *auntie* Mavis Litchfield's home, later chilling at Shirley's Continental Restaurant. I learnt about her family background, used to teased her on why they never visited their village home, as I had Luyengo or Nkambeni. In retrospect, seeing her as an international trailblazer, I get it, she was never bound by any village roots, as there was never a cattle post and village home to visit. Therefore she can propel into international space with very little baggage, as her family background can be transient in a suitcase. Family portraits are enough to solidify any new environment, unlike some of us who are always attached to *ligusha*, *umbhindvo*, village chicken and goats.

International Education Legacy

This international education legacy propelled by family, began with a diploma in teaching French

SWAZI INTERNATIONAL WOMAN



as a foreign language in France, after graduating in Social Science at Kwaluseni. Proserpina studied French linguistics and phonetics with a minor in education, until her Masters in International Education. I recall during her wedding to Mike Fisher, she had recently completed the Master's programme, it was a double celebration. In Swaziland she was a French examiner for the ministry of education and training, taught French at Mater Dolorosa High and Sifundzani Primary Schools. With limited opportunities for growth in Swaziland, Pros joined the American International School of Johannesburg, where she taught French and elementary Spanish. This is where she created and developed a modern language department whilst championing community services and intercultural awareness within the school.

When in Johannesburg, Pros married Mike, they were blessed with my godchild Kaela. Then Proserpina took on a job as Regional Manager for International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma for Africa, Europe and Middle East, based in Geneva. Our tongues were wagging, she married a British man who was so content in Africa, was now returning him to Europe. This is the Swazi women trailblazing an international education legacy, such that Mike the British-African businessman became the 'House Husband'.

Yes, he was raising their daughter whilst she was pursuing an international education legacy and taking many courses, later became an independent international education consultant. Proserpina, became a secondary principal at Strothoff International School in Germany, currently Assistant Tutorial House at the United Nations International High School in New York. Until her new appointment as Director of Education at International Office of the United World Colleges in London, she expresses her passion as founding director of Education Aspirations.

In conclusion

In her own words, Proserpina Dhlamini-Fisher states "I am a competent and successful relationship manager and educational leader with extensive and diverse experience, working with national and international schools and educa-

tional organisations, and governments, capable of leading, managing and motivating culturally diverse teams to achieve personal and organisational educational goals. My key skill areas include building and maintaining stakeholder relationships, training and development, curriculum development; instructional coaching; design and delivery; organisation and management processes; supervising, empowering and mentoring; change management; remote management; managing databases; and monitoring and evaluation programmes. Seeking professional challenges in educational organisations that are looking to expand educational access, improve education outcomes, educate, develop, empower, innovate and train educators and learners through collaborative interactions, with

One invaluable lesson learnt in my 54 years going on 55 years this September, is how there are two types of family relationships, members of genetic pool or members of your soul matrix. The late Babe Mshini was a disciplinarian, like my grandfather, whilst Make LaShongwe was the sweetheart, like my grandmother, hence I found comfort in their home.

diverse stakeholders."

This Swazi gem is trailblazing an international education legacy.

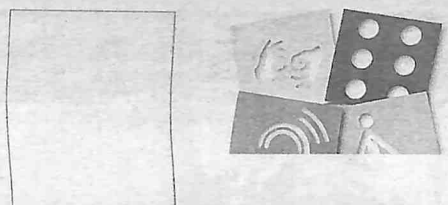
Thus, turning tables on the international community, who have always believed they have to educate us. And most significantly, returning her husband Mike and daughter Kaela to their roots in London, UK, through her successful career.

Proserpina, am proud of your achievements and successes as they also reflect on how much I have contributed to you as sister and lifetime friend. Pros, you have a special place in my heart, my soul sister, as we always disagree with dignity. Never shared insults or nasty name calling, hence we experienced love not jealousy or envy of each other's choices and success stories.

Till today, we support each other's path with respect, understanding how we do not have access to each other's God's plan.

When time permits, we have long dinners with wine, catching up whilst asking for clarity on what this all means, accepting the limitations of not fully comprehending each other's choices. Hence I celebrate you this international women's month and welcome you to the 50s during this March your birthday month, we have journeyed many joyous moments, parties, potholes and pitfalls. You go Girl, Be Bold for Change!

A mother's tale about raising an autistic son



Disability Rights Advocate
E-mail: celi@asantestewartfoundation.com
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I have a three-year-five months old son, Sive, who was diagnosed with autism. At birth he appeared normal, but as he grew older I started noticing there was a problem.

When breastfeeding, I'd talk to him but he wouldn't make any eye contact. Often he appeared angry – scratching and kicking, especially when distracted from what he was focusing on he would be repetitive and fixated on things. He started saying a few words like 'mama' and 'dada' at nine months, then lost his speech completely by the time he was 16 months. I consulted the GP for advice and was referred to a Speech and Language Therapist. She stated that my son had delayed language development in conjunction with social interaction difficulties. The Speech and Language Therapist also referred him to different health professionals for further assessment and intervention. He had multi-disciplinary assessments and therapies for almost a year before he was given the autism diagnosis.

I dreaded the day when we were to go for the feedback, and when we were told by the Child Development Team that Sive was indeed autistic, first I was shocked with the reality, then got scared and emotional as I was wondering if we would be able to meet his special needs as a family. I cried a lot and my husband was with me all the way.

As a family, we face the daily challenges that come with this condition. We have to deal with the rejection and the comments we get in some public places such as play areas, schools, church, and restaurants because of his behaviour. The anxiety and fear of the unknown due to the unpredictable behaviour can be overwhelming. We try and keep to ourselves as much as we can to avoid the negative comments.

The worst time was when we were on a taxi, and it was his first time being in another car that wasn't his dad's. He was kicking, screaming and hitting out. He kicked the front seat and the taxi driver shouted at him. He said he had never seen a child so spoilt as Sive, and if he broke anything I'd pay for it. I had to drop off before the situation worsened and before getting to my destination. My husband and I sometimes have to work less hours between because one of us has to mind Sive to try and avoid involving strangers for childcare. This puts financial strain on the family. We are usually exhausted due to everyone trying to work tirelessly to help him achieve certain goals and meet his needs.

My older son, Mukelwe protects Sive and understands that he cannot talk. What he doesn't understand is why Sive scratches and kicks him, why

we cannot go to public places as a family more often, and why he cannot go to a friend's party with his brother. When Sive was 22 months old we visited home (Swaziland) from the United Kingdom and Sive was very unsettled and cried the whole journey. On arrival, he didn't allow any of our excited family members to touch him, and the whole family ended up not enjoying the holiday. We have not visited again since. Sive is unable to communicate verbally at present and gets frustrated when he cannot express himself effectively. He doesn't like being in unfamiliar surroundings and around strangers, and doesn't like sharing or taking turns. He can throw himself on the floor, kick, hit, scratch and even bang his head to show his frustration. I consider Sive to be a strong and intelligent boy. He is very good at solving puzzles, and with technology such as playing games independently on the computer, iPhone or tablet. He is also good at playing musical instruments, singing and dancing. He is a lot calmer now and progressing positively, but I fear for his future and ask myself many questions. However, I still have hopes for him to live an independent life, communicate verbally and understand the meaning of the words he says and to understand, interact and connect with the world around him instead of living in his own bubble.

My strength comes from the reassurance and support I get from my immediate and extended families, friends and support groups. Sive does not take any medication at present, and I so wish to keep it that way for as long as he is manageable without. My belief about medicating is that it does help to a certain extent. However, there are many fatal side effects that come with the medication. It should, therefore, be given as a last resort.

If there is something that brings a smile on my face, is my child's obsession with cleanliness and tidying up. He picks up even the tiniest dirt on the floor and puts it in the bin. He also wipes his mouth after every spoon feed.

Both my husband and I are nurses by profession and have nursed clients with autism at some point. However, it becomes different when you have to manage your own child with autism. Two of my closest friends have autistic children and I never thought I'd find myself in the same situation. I now realise that I was not supportive enough to them as I didn't know what they were going through.

With our families and friends living very far, we can't get physical support from them but with the improved technology we always have people to talk to and get emotional support. The advantage of being in the UK, is that the local authority ensures that all children with special needs or disabilities are assessed as early as possible and have education and health care plan in place. Provisions and budget are made according to the child's needs and requirements.

As a parent, you won't have to be stressed about finances as far as therapies/ health and education are concerned. My message to other families with autistic children is they should always think positively, follow their own instincts and never ever give up hope. This article was submitted by a mother who is raising an autistic child. However, she asked that she not be identified

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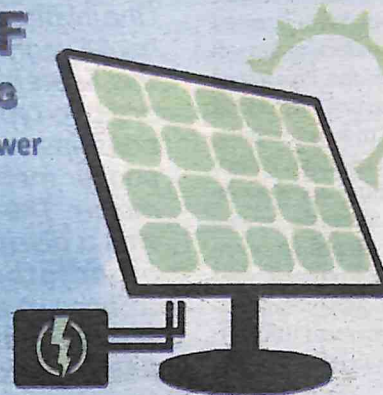
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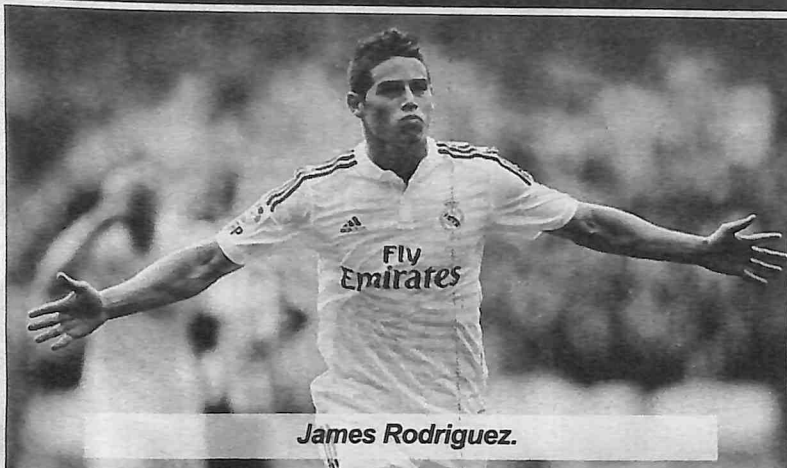
MADRID - Bayern Munich are keen on Real Madrid forward James Rodriguez as the Colombian continues to struggle to get into Zinedine Zidane's team.

The story made the front page of Spanish sports newspaper Marca, who claim Bayern Manager Carlo Ancelotti wants the former Monaco man for his team.

Ancelotti brought James to the Bernabeu after he impressed for Colombia at the 2014 World Cup and he enjoyed a strong first year at the club, but has spent much of this campaign on the bench.

Marca also claim Manchester United and Juventus are keen on James, and that the player will make a decision on his future in the summer.

Ivan Rakitic meanwhile is on the



James Rodriguez.

front page of Mundo Deportivo, after agreeing a contract extension at Barcelona until 2021. They report the Croatian midfielder, who starred in the Champions League comeback against PSG, describ-

ing the deal as 'the best possible gift' and posing on the cover with the Eiffel Tower in the palm of his hand, in reference to the sensational win over the Paris club. *Daily Mail*

Alonso hints at McLaren exit after nightmare test

BARCELONA - Two-time Formula One world champion Fernando Alonso ruled out retiring until he is handed a competitive car as his beleaguered McLaren-Honda suffered more reliability problems to end pre-season testing on Friday.

The Spaniard broke down twice as electrical faults again restricted his running to just 43 laps and the 11th fastest time of 13 drivers.

Alonso's contract with McLaren expires at the end of the season.

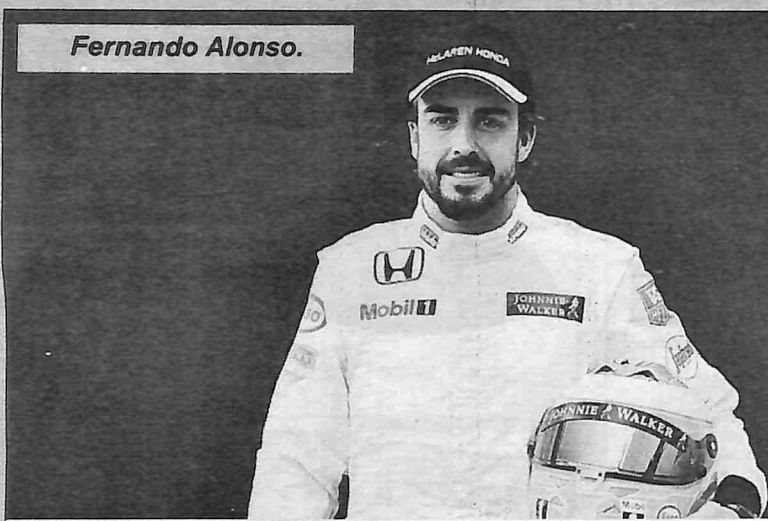
"I want victories and podiums and if it all goes wrong, I will attack next year," Alonso, 35, told reporters.

"It will give me more motivation to continue. I will not stop driving without a good result, which I think is what I deserve."

McLaren finished bottom of the paddock in terms of laps completed from the eight days of testing at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya.

"We have only one problem which

Fernando Alonso.



is the power unit," added Alonso.

"There is no reliability and there is no power. We are 30 kilometres (per hour) down on the straight."

Alonso's criticism backed up McLaren racing director Eric Boullier's claim on Wednesday that Honda are "under maximum pressure" to come up with

solutions to their continued reliability problems.

At the other end of the field, the likes of Kimi Raikkonen, Sebastian Vettel, Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas were blitzing the times set in recent years for Mercedes and Ferrari.

AFP

KLOPP ADMITS LIVERPOOL COULD MISS OUT ON CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RETURN

LONDON - Jurgen Klopp has Liverpool's sights locked on a top-four finish in the Premier League, but concedes that fierce competition for places could leave them disappointed.

The Reds have been without continental football this season after finishing eighth in 2015-16 and suffering defeat in the Europa League final.

A lack of midweek action outside of domestic duties was expected to aid the Anfield cause this season, and did work in their favour over the first half of the season.

An untimely wobble at the start of

2017 has threatened to undo much of the Reds' hard work, but they remain in contention to book a return ticket to the Champions League party.

Klopp is aware of the importance placed on such a standing for a club of Liverpool's stature, but acknowledges that nothing can be taken for granted in a fierce scramble for places.

"Of course it is in our hands. At this moment I think we should only think about how we can do it," said the German tactician.

"Would it be a disappointment if we don't reach it? Yes because we think we should qualify for it.

"Is it possible that we don't qualify?

Yes because of the league, because of the opponents and all that stuff. It would be because of us and we have to take that situation like it is. It is our big target of course. We want to do everything to get it.

"The top six or seven teams can't be sure that they will be in the top four. Last week they were already in, then they are already out. There are a lot of games to play.

"For nobody it is already decided. As long as we have the opportunity I think we should try everything. It is wonderful to play there and it would be important for the club."

Liverpool currently sit fourth in the Premier League table, two points clear of Arsenal and three ahead of arch-rivals Manchester United - although both of those directly below them boast a game in hand. **GOAL**



Karolina Pliskova.

PLISKOVA SQUEAKS PAST PUIG AT INDIAN WELLS

INDIAN WELLS - World number three Karolina Pliskova battled back to beat Olympic champion Monica Puig 1-6, 6-4 6-4 on Friday, but says she'll have to do better to go further at Indian Wells.

"I don't even think I deserved to win tonight," third-seeded Czech Pliskova said after recovering from a break down in the third set to reach the third round.

Puig, ranked 43rd in the world, had never taken a set off Pliskova in three prior meetings.

But she was on fire from the baseline early, breaking the big-serving Czech four times in the opening set.

Pliskova, winner of titles in Brisbane and Qatar already this season, was in trouble again in

the decisive set, down one break at 0-3

But Pliskova won six of the last seven games to advance despite 34 unforced errors to just 19 winners.

"Hopefully I can get something from it and move on and play better next time," said Pliskova, who is aiming to improve on her semi-final run at Indian Wells last year.

In other second-round matches, 17-year-old American Kayla Day shocked Australian Open semi-finalist Mirjana Lucic-Baroni to earn a clash with French Open champion Garbine Muguruza.

Day outlasted the 35-year-old Lucic-Baroni 6-4, 5-7, 7-5, rallying from a break down in the third to advance. **AFP**

BATTLING DEPRESSION THE HARDEST FIGHT

LONDON - Troubled former world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury took to social media on Friday to declare his battle with depression was the toughest of his life but he was ready to make a fresh start.

The 28-year-old Englishman - whose last bout was his remarkable defeat of the then WBO and WBA world champion Wladimir Klitschko in November 2015 -- hinted on Monday through his favourite form of public contact Twitter he would be making a comeback to the ring.

However, he faces a significant obstacle in convincing the British Boxing Board of Control (BBBofC) to return his licence after a series of outspoken remarks and admit-

ting to taking cocaine for depression. "I've moved on from the dark & scary place I've been living & if I can beat depression then I can beat anything! The hardest fight of my life!" tweeted Fury, who had his licence taken away last October after he surrendered his world titles so he could concentrate on medical treatment. "I'm starting fresh, letting go of the past & concentrating on the future, got to keep moving forwards, #startingfromthebottom." Fury, whose cousin Hughie Fury is due to contest a world heavyweight title bout with New Zealander WBO champion Joseph Parker on April 1, admitted he had piled on the weight since he went into self-imposed exile. **AFP**

Tyson Fury.





Luis Enrique.

'ARSENAL SHOULD GET ON THE PHONE TO ENRIQUE'

LONDON - Arsenal "should get on the phone to Luis Enrique" and ensure they are prepared for the potential departure of Arsene Wenger, says Paul Merson.

The Gunners are facing up to an uncertain future when it comes to the man in their dugout, with serious questions being asked of their current boss.

Wenger has faced protests against his reign, with a disgruntled fan base calling for no contract extension to be put to the under-fire Frenchman.

If no terms are tabled, then the long-serving coach will head for the Emirates Stadium exit this summer.

Merson believes that post, should it become available, needs to be filled by a more charismatic presence, with outgoing Barcelona manager Luis Enrique and Everton tactician Ronald Koeman ideal candidates for the

role.

The former Arsenal midfielder wrote in a column for the Daily Star: "Arsenal need someone much more ruthless. Someone like Koeman. He's got a mean streak and he doesn't let his players get away with anything."

"I think he'd be a good fit and would take the job if they offered it to him. If not, they should get on the phone to Luis Enrique. He's managed a world-class team full of world-class players."

"Straight away that brings respect. Something has to change because these players are doing my head in. It's like they don't care." Pressure has mounted on Wenger following a demoralising exit from European competition, with the Gunners widely criticised for a supposed lack of effort in a 10-2 aggregate defeat to German giants Bayern Munich.

GOAL

'MOURINHO STILL THE BEST, NOT GUARDIOLA'

MANCHESTER - Jose Mourinho is the world's best coach, not Pep Guardiola, according to Middlesbrough Manager Aitor Karanka.

Mourinho and Guardiola arrived in Manchester ahead of this season, appointed at United and City, respectively.

Karanka, whose team faced City in the FA Cup quarter-finals yesterday, believes United picked up the better tactician.

"Pep is not the best coach in the world. The best coach in the world is Jose Mourinho," he told UK newspapers.

"He has shown it at Porto, at Inter Milan, Chelsea and Real Madrid and Manchester United. He was the best [in La Liga] and he still is the best."

"I've never worked with Pep, but Jose started this season with some criticism, but he has already won two trophies for Man United."

"Jose is the best for me. I think Pep has to win the Premier League to prove [he is one of the best]. I think he has to win a trophy [this season]."

Mourinho has led United to Community Shield and EFL Cup success this season, while they are still in contention for the Europa League and FA Cup.

City are in the hunt for the FA Cup and Champions League, with Antonio Conte's Chelsea flying high atop the Premier League.

Karanka believes Guardiola, who had trophy-laden spells at Barcelona and Bayern Munich, has taken time to adjust in England.

"I think he's realised that this is a different football, a different league, and he has grasped how difficult the challenge is. It's taking him time to adapt and it's not been easy for him," he said.

"It's difficult when you arrive in a new country, with a new philosophy where a lot of things are different."

"He has some very good players, but the mentality here is different. Things are different and it takes time to adjust."

GOAL



Jose Mourinho.

'MESSI WAS THE WORST, NEARING THE END'

BARCELONA - Lionel Messi was Barcelona's worst player in their incredible Champions League win over Paris Saint-Germain, according to ex-France coach Raymond Domenech, who believes the attacker is now in danger of slipping behind Neymar and Luis Suarez in the club's hierarchy.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has been the very pinnacle of football for many years and is not slowing down, having scored 39 goals in 38 appearances in all competitions this season.

Domenech, though, believes that he has seen signs of a superstar on the wane, with Messi aided by the efforts of others as Barca pulled off a miraculous 6-1 win over PSG, to reverse their 4-0 deficit from the first-leg and book their place in the quarter-finals.

He said: "The worst Barcelona player in this game, it was [Messi]. He was in the centre of the pitch, like when he does not want to run. "His bad games, he's



Lionel Messi.

always doing that, he's coming down, he believes he organises, he wants to do everything. "I think he's at the end, but he gave so much, he was so magical. He was on and off, he was missing."

"Neymar was breathtaking because he fought, he believed. Until the end, he was attacking. Him and Suarez, but Suarez is different, he should wear boxing gloves." GOAL

'Phenomenal' Kante tipped for Player of the Year award

LONDON - N'Golo Kante has to be a serious contender for the PFA Player of the Year award, according to Chelsea colleague Gary Cahill.

The France international is fast closing in on back-to-back Premier League titles, having helped Leicester City to a remarkable triumph in 2015-16.

His efforts with the Foxes earned him a big-money move to Stamford Bridge, and Kante has not looked out of place within a star-studded Blues squad.

The attacking exploits of Eden Hazard and Diego Costa may have generated more headlines this season, but Antonio Conte is as reliant on his midfield enforcer as he is any other player.

Kante is a key cog in a well-oiled machine and Cahill believes he would be deserving of top personal accolades if they are to come his way at the end of another productive campaign.

He told talkSPORT: "He has to be in consideration for it [the Player of the Year award], for sure."

"Everyone has seen his qualities and what he brought to Leicester last season, with the story behind them winning the title."

"To come to a new club he has stepped up again and been tremendous this season. He works hard and is a humble guy off the pitch and on it he is phenomenal. "I notice a lot obviously because he is just in front of me, he is winning balls he has no right to win and is also quality going forward - he breaks up play and bursts forward with the ball, which eases the pressure on the back four and the team." While Kante has been a revelation in his debut campaign at Chelsea, so too has Italian coach Conte.

The former Juventus boss is still chasing down a domestic league and cup

double in his first season at the helm, with Cahill revealing that a fresh approach has helped to spark the Blues back into life following a disappointing showing as defending champions last term.

"When people were talking about what we were lacking last season, I think it was a freak season. We are sitting with the same bunch of players near enough which performed well and won the league under Jose [Mourinho, in 2015], we were top for nearly all of that season. "It's hard to say what drastically changed, just [Conte's] ideas and the way he sees football being played in terms of formation, we have just adapted to that. "It's been different for us and new for everyone to learn, that is really the difference and you can see his hunger for winning, his desire and work ethic rubs off on the players on a daily basis." GOAL

Borussia Dortmund confident Aubameyang will stay

BERLIN - Borussia Dortmund Chief Executive Hans-Joachim Watzke is confident Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang will not leave Signal Iduna Park at the end of the season.

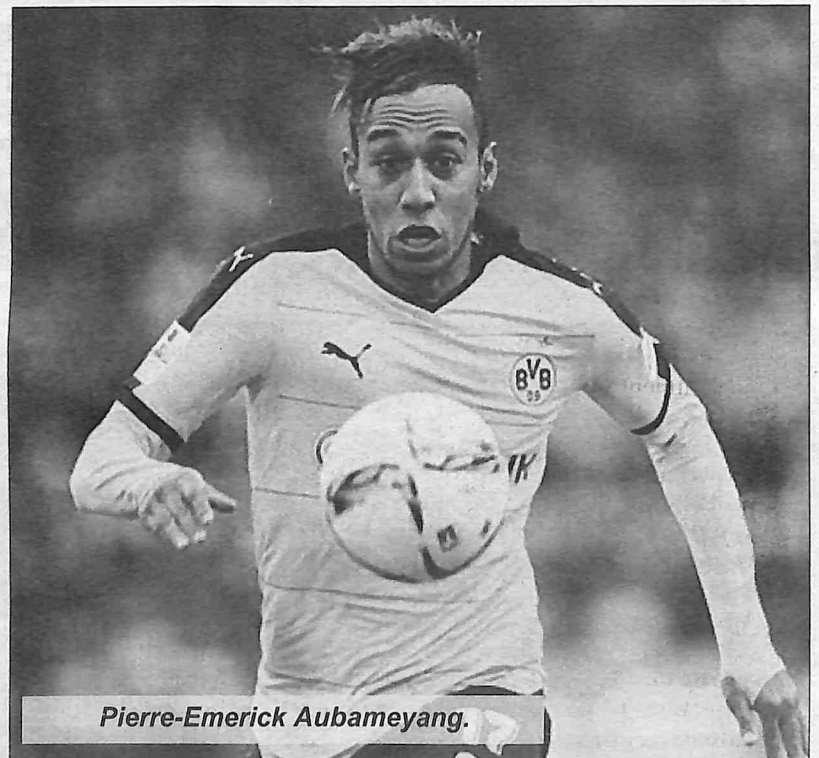
The prolific striker has a contract with BVB until June 2020, but is continually being linked with a move away from the Bundesliga giants, with Real Madrid believed to be among his admirers.

Aubameyang recently fuelled speculation that he could be on the move when he stated he might have to leave in order to take the next step in his career, but Dortmund remain optimistic he will stay put.

"Ever since Auba joined Dortmund, I have never had the feeling that he is planning to leave this club," Watzke told Bild.

"And I think he realises that we are building a great team again here."

"We know what he means to us, but he also knows what we can do for him. "We are not thinking about a transfer at all at this stage."



Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang.

The 27-year-old has been in sublime form this term and has already

netted 28 goals in 31 appearances in all competitions. GOAL



BARCLAYS

ENGLISH PREMIERSHIP



MAN CITY BOOK FA CUP SEMI-FINAL PLACE

MIDDLESBROUGH - Pep Guardiola will be returning to Wembley in his debut season with Manchester City after goals from David Silva and Sergio Aguero handed them an expected FA Cup quarter-final victory at Middlesbrough. Guardiola won the European Cup as a player and manager with Barcelona at England's national stadium and now faces an FA Cup semi-final there as reward for naming a strong team at The Riverside, despite having a Champions League tie in Monaco on Wednesday.

Silva gave them the advantage as the clock ticked just past the two-minute mark and after Aguero had struck the post, he bagged his 24th goal of the season after a great run by man-of-the-match Leroy Sané.

Hurt

Boro didn't disgrace themselves but once again a lack of goal threat hurt them. They have slipped into the bottom three of the Premier League having failed to score in their last four league games, and face a real battle for survival, particularly as striker Rudy Gestede limped off in the first half and

may be a doubt for next Sunday's game against Manchester United. Guardiola named an attacking team without a natural holding midfielder and was rewarded within three minutes with the opening goal. Yaya Toure clipped a pass to Pablo Zabaleta overlapping on the right and when the Argentine's cushioned volley into the box bypassed Raheem Sterling, Silva finished decisively from six yards. Boro's only three wins this year have all come in the FA Cup and they responded well to the early setback urged on by 32,000 fans in good voice. *Dailymail*

Pochettino tells his wife to stay away from White Hart Lane

LONDON - Tottenham Manager Mauricio Pochettino has admitted he has told his wife Karina to stay away from White Hart Lane in case she stops the side winning.

Spurs are currently second in the table and are the only team in the Premier League yet to lose at home this season.

Pochettino's side have won their last two home games against Stoke and Everton and the Argentine has joked that he is happy for his wife to stay away from the ground for now. "In the last few weeks, she has not been coming to White Hart Lane so I said, 'better you stay at home because we keep winning,'" he told reporters.

Finish

The Spurs boss also revealed what his wife had thought of his behaviour during his side's recent 3-2 win over Everton.

Pochettino was seen celebrating widely as Dele Alli made it 3-1 in stoppage time before another late goal from Romelu Lukaku set up a nervy finish.

"I was mad," he added. "When we finished the game, I saw my phone and my wife said, 'Oh, what



Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino.

did you do? You lost your head when Dele scored? Never again,' my wife said.

"She always has ideas for the team. She always when I arrive home because she was watching on TV, she says 'why this or why that?'"

"She always gave the opinion, but always after, never before. We lose - 'why play this? Why not that? Why not change?'"

Goal

Guardiola accepts silverware not style will dictate fate

MANCHESTER - Pep Guardiola indicated on Friday his tenure as Manchester City Manager will not be a long one if his first season in charge ends without a trophy.

Sheikh Mansour, the club's owner, gave Guardiola his full support when they met in Abu Dhabi last month, and there is no suggestion he faces the sack if he fails to win a trophy this season.

However, Guardiola is aware of the demands for success at City, whose Chief Executive, Ferran Soriano, set a target of five trophies in five years for Manuel Pellegrini, the previous manager.

Pellegrini managed to win three in three seasons, securing the Premier League title once and the League Cup twice, but it was not enough to save his job.

Guardiola's hopes of winning the Premier League this season are dim as they are 10 points behind leaders Chelsea with 11 games to play.

Trophy

The 46-year-old Spaniard's best hope of a trophy will come elsewhere; his team was looking to secure an FA Cup semi-final place yesterday by beating Middlesbrough, four days before the second leg of 16 Champions League visit to Monaco.

City lead 5-3 after the first-leg. "If I have no silverware, I will not



Manchester City Manager Pep Guardiola.

be here for a long time," Guardiola admitted.

"Being a manager depends on results but I always believe deep in my heart that results depend on the way you play. That's why I need to be convinced that we're playing better every day.

"I know how it was after six, seven months here together with my periods at Barcelona and Bayern Munich".

AFP

'I AM NOT LOOKING FOR REVENGE'

MANCHESTER - Jose Mourinho insists revenge will not be on his mind when he heads back to Chelsea with Manchester United.

The Portuguese will be back in familiar surroundings tomorrow when the Red Devils take in an FA Cup quarter-final clash at Stamford Bridge.

Mourinho has already made one visit to west London since seeing a second spell as Chelsea boss come to an end, with the Blues stunning him with a humbling 4-0 Premier League win.

Opportunity

United will get the opportunity to make amends in the cup, while giving their manager a chance to get one over on his former employers, but a man with close ties to both clubs insists his future is locked on the present, not the past.

Mourinho told Football Focus: "I am not looking for revenge, I'm not looking for anything wrong or bad."

"If you say something special, maybe special, one thing is to have Gary Staker in the tunnel before and after the match. A close super friend". *Goal*

'PARDEW IN THE RUNNING TO TAKE OVER AT NORWICH'

LONDON - Former Crystal Palace and Newcastle Manager Alan Pardew is in the frame to become Norwich City's new boss.

Pardew could replace Alex Neil at Carrow Road after the Scot was sacked on Friday, according to reports.

Pardew is available after he was dismissed by Palace in December with the Eagles 17th in the Premier League.

They won six of their 36 games under Pardew in 2016 but the former West Ham chief has promotion pedigree in the Sky Bet Championship having guided the Hammers to the Premier League via the play-offs in 2005.

Former Birmingham manager Gary Rowett is also interested in the job having failed to land the Rangers role with Al-Gharafa boss Pedro Caixinha expected to move to Ibrox.

Neil was axed following five games without a win but the Canaries had already slipped off the promotion pace in the Championship after a disastrous pre-Christmas run, losing seven games in nine matches.

Relegated from the Premier League last season, they were one of the favourites to go up but are nine points outside the play-off spots in eighth.



Former Crystal Palace and Newcastle Manager Alan Pardew.

Neil leaves Norwich, who have put Alan Irvine in temporary charge ahead of yesterday's visit of Blackburn, after just over two years at the club having taken them to promotion in 2015.

The Canaries are also without a chief executive after Jez Moxey resigned in February less than seven months after joining. *TeamTalk*

South African SOCCER



Deon Hotto.

Hotto, Wana guide Celtic into Nedbank Cup Last 16

RUSTENBURG - Bloemfontein Celtic were second best for most of their Nedbank Cup last 32 tie with Buya Msuthu at the Moruleng Stadium yesterday afternoon, yet managed to come away with victory.

After Celtic scored very early on, Buya Msuthu played themselves back into the game and had the better of first-half chances, although they were unable to get on the scoresheet.

The third-tier club continued to enjoy the better of the play in the second half and seemed a good bet to at least take the match to extra time, only for Phunya Sele Sele to snatch a late goal against the run of play.

The rookies got off to the worst possible start when with the first move of the cup-tie, Celtic attacked down the right flank through Khetokwakhe Masuku, who put in an excellent cross to the back post which was emphatically met with a downward header into the net by Deon Hotto, the goal coming after just 25 seconds. *Teamtalk*



BAROKA END 15-GAME WINLESS RUN

CAPETOWN - Baroka FC ended their 15-game winless run in all competitions, after recording a 2-0 victory over NFD outfit, FC Cape Town in their Nedbank Cup Last 32 tie.

Neither side could carve out any openings in the first 15 minutes on very dry pitch at the NKK Stadium.

The same trend continued as the half went on, although Baroka did hit the woodwork just before the 30-minute

mark.

That proved to be the only chance of the half, as the sides went into the half-time break with the score locked at 0-0.

Lead

However, the Absa Premiership side were awarded a penalty in the 52nd minute when Richard Matloga was fouled in the box. Phineas Ravhuvali stepped up and converted the spot kick, to hand Baroka the lead.

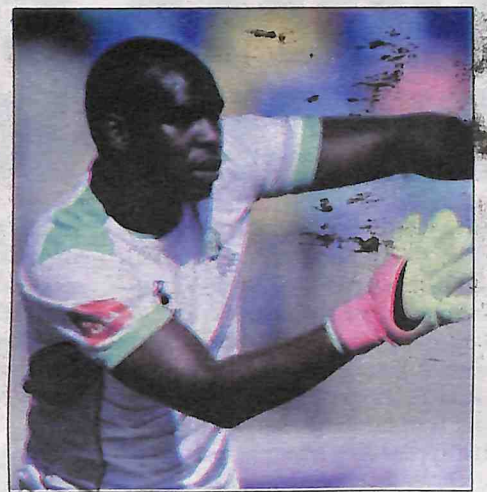
Bakgaga were awarded

another penalty after the hour-mark. Ravhuvali stepped again, but had his spot-kick was saved by Buti Khoza.

However, the visitors eventually doubled their lead in the 72nd minute, as Matloga fired past Khoza to make it 2-0.

The Mother City outfit failed to carve out chances in the closing stages of the second half, as Baroka held on for the victory.

Soccer Laduma



Mbongeni Mzimela.

Dikwena suffer slim defeat in Uganda

KAMPALA - Platinum Stars suffered a 1-0 defeat to Ugandan outfit, Vipers SC in the first leg of their CAF Confederation Cup encounter.

It proved to be an evenly poised affair in the opening exchanges, although neither side could carve out an opening.

Although, Mbongeni Mzimela was called into action midway through the first half, as he produced a save to keep out a long distance effort.

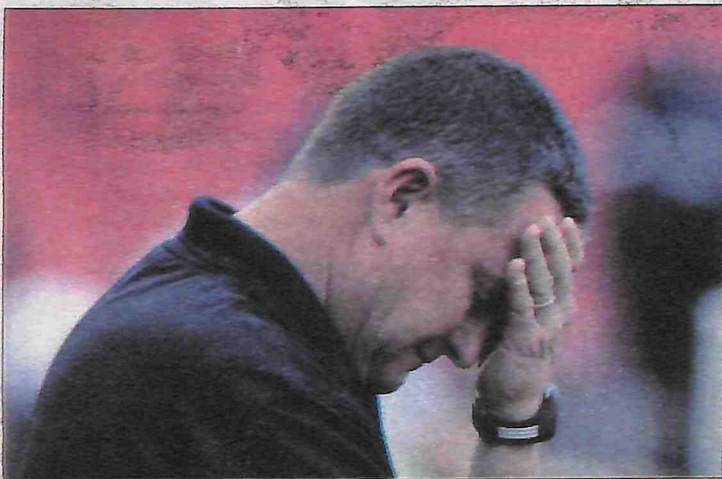
That proved to be the only real effort at goal from either side, as the score remained goalless as the sides entered the break.

Deadlock

However, Vipers broke the deadlock shortly after the half-time break, courtesy of a strike from Milton Karisa.

Cavin Johnson opted for a change midway through the half as Sipho Senne made way for Benson Shilongo as they pushed for an away goal.

Dikwena went close to snatch an away goal in the closing stages, but Shilongo managed to head over the crossbar, as the score remained 1-0 to Vipers. *Soccerladuma*



Gavin Hunt.

Bafana Bafana speculation tiring - Bidvest Wits coach Hunt

JOHANNESBURG - Bafana Bafana are still without a coach almost three months after Shakes Mashaba was sacked by the South African Football Association (SAFA). Carlos Queiroz and Herve Renard were the favourites to take over from Mashaba, while Gavin Hunt's name has constantly been mentioned.

The 52-year-old is arguably one of South Africa's most decorated coaches and many believe he deserves the nod.

However, Hunt has continued to downplay reports linking him to Bafana's top job. He reiterated that he hasn't spoken to anyone at SAFA

about the vacant position.

"It's no distraction at all," Hunt told the media.

"Obviously they (SAFA) are going about things their own way," Hunt said.

"No one has ever spoken to me about the job, so it not a distraction although the speculation can be tiring," he added.

Stuart Baxter is reportedly SAFA's preferred candidate as they appear to have given up on both Queiroz and Renard, but the SuperSport United coach has distanced himself from the reports.

Goal

ORLANDO PIRATES WARY OF UNKNOWN BEES

JOHANNESBURG - The Buccaneers are a side pretty much low on confidence right now, having last won a game four months ago. They are coming off 1-1 draws in their last three games under new coach Kjell Jonevret.

Jonevret is cautious of the unknown ABC Motsepe League side and he knows it is going to be a tough task.

"For me the cups have always been the important thing. I think I've won seven or eight as player and as a coach," Jonevret said according to TMG Sport.

"(In Scandinavia) it's the easiest way to play in Europe. But at the same time I know how it is with these games that everybody expects you to win.

"I hate them. Because it's always about them fighting like never before. You don't really know how the stadium is," Jonevret added.

"So it will be tough. And we're going to go there with what we think is best for the day. There could be a few guys who do not play, because they have had really tough games in four days now," Jonevret said.

Bees coach Chippa Njedu says playing such a big club like Bucs is a motivation in itself for their players as it's the biggest game of their careers.

"It's going to be a nice game to play against Pirates. Our players watch



Orlando Pirates' Benson Mhlongo, Kjell Jonevret and Harold Legodi.

them on TV. I've told the players to go out and play and enjoy themselves because they've got nothing to lose in this game," Njedu told The Sowetan.

Struggled

The Sea Robbers could possibly give a few of their fringe players who have struggled for game-time like Bernard Morrison, Thembele Sikhakhane,

Gladwin Shitolo and Siyabonga Mpontshane a run today.

In saying that, undermining the second tier side will be detrimental considering the last time they faced a second tier side at this stage of the competition in Maluti FET, Pirates went down 4-1 in 2013.

Goal

ROMA CHIEF SLAMS LUCIANO SPALLETTI

ROME - Speculation linking Roma Coach Luciano Spalletti with a shock move to Serie A giants Juventus intensified yesterday after the Italian was slammed by Club President James Pallotta.

Roma's hopes of ending their 16-year wait for the Italian league title appear slim after champions Juventus opened up an 11-point lead at the top of the table thanks to a controversial 2-1 win over AC Milan on Friday.

Although Roma can reduce arrears to eight points with a win at struggling Palermo today, it appears Spalletti's second spell with Roma could be about to end.

With Juve coach Massimiliano Allegri reportedly edging closer to replacing Arsene Wenger at Arsenal, Corriere della Sera said Spalletti has given a "commitment" to the Turin giants to take over from next season.

If confirmed, it could help explain

Pallotta's surprising outburst at Spalletti for "making mistakes" regarding summer recruitment, youth players and his decision to keep Egypt winger Mohamed Salah on the bench for 52 minutes of a damaging 2-1 league defeat at home to Napoli last week.

"We have players who are playing a lot because of injuries, and because of the mistakes that were made last summer concerning who should come to the club and who should leave," Pallotta told Sirius XM.

"We could have and should have changed strategy concerning youth players. Other teams use their younger players to give the regulars a rest.

"Before our game against Napoli, I didn't

feel comfortable seeing the line-up. We only introduced Salah 35 minutes (sic) from the end of the game, but when he came on we created a lot of chances and hit the woodwork twice.

"Maybe he (Salah) should have been on from the start. I think even Luciano admitted as much after the game."

Roma's defeat last week was, for many fans, the final nail in the coffin in terms of challenging for a title they last won in 2001. Since then, Roma have finished runners-up no less than eight times.

But Pallotta's public criticism of Spalletti could spell the end, especially as reports elsewhere suggested the former Zenith Saint Petersburg coach could secure the most prestigious job in Italian league football. In a report entitled 'Sleeping with the enemy', Corriere della Sera claimed yesterday Juventus have "sounded out" Spalletti and obtained a "kind of commitment" that he will succeed Allegri should the current Bianconeri handler quit the club in June, a year before his contract expires.

AFP

Roma Coach Luciano Spalletti.



Bale, Benzema and Ronaldo is what I prefer - Zidane

MADRID - Zinedine Zidane insists playing all-star forward line Gareth Bale, Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo together gives Real Madrid the best chance of glory this season.

The acclaimed 'BBC' trio lined up as Madrid came from behind to secure a 3-1 win at Napoli on Tuesday, progressing to the quarter-finals of the Champions League by a 6-2 aggregate margin.

However, none of them were on the scoresheet and their status at the Santiago Bernabeu has come under threat this season.

Four-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo increasingly appears to be more at home in central areas as opposed to out on the flank, while Bale endured a lengthy spell on the sidelines following ankle tendon surgery.

The Welsh star's absence led Zidane to experiment with different starting formations - 4-4-2 proving more successful than one deploying three centre-backs.

Meanwhile, there have been increasing calls for Alvaro Morata to replace Benzema as a starting striker, with the Frenchman only netting three goals in La Liga since the turn of the year.

"Bale, Benzema and Ronaldo could play with the four in midfield, but I prefer with three up front," said Zidane ahead of Sunday's La Liga match with Real Betis, where the issue of Madrid's best starting formation was repeatedly raised.

"Of course, Bale can drop into the midfield four, but I prefer the three up front. What do you [the reporter] prefer, why?"

"I think Gareth offers more up front with Benzema and Ronaldo. Gareth on the left, Ronaldo on the right and Karim Benzema up front - that's how I like to see my front three.

"With the three up front we create a lot of chances, with three [midfield] players tucked in behind.

"We played very well in Eibar [last weekend's 4-1 win] with a 4-2-3-1 formation, or 4-4-2.

"It depends. With one up front, two up front or four in the middle we can change our formation and switch. Everyone has a right to have their own

opinion. "You may feel we play better with four men across the middle.

"If all three [Benzema, Bale and Ronaldo] are fit I have all three playing up front."

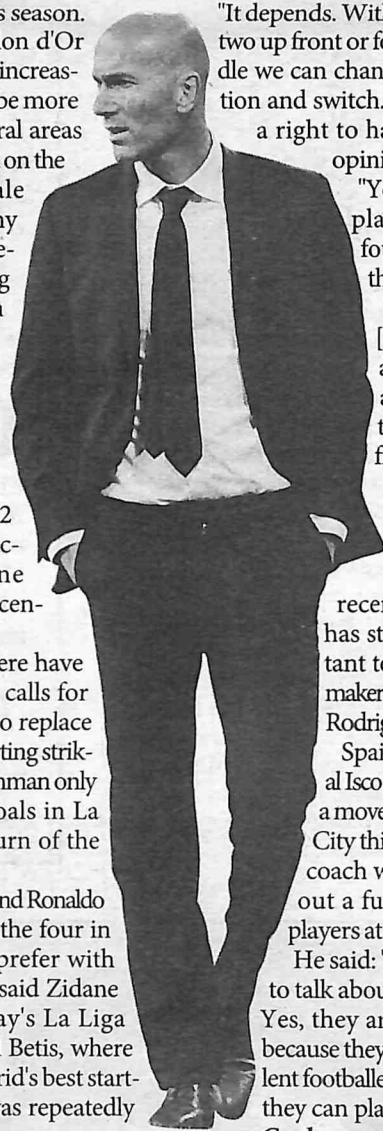
Despite Zidane mixing up his tactical approach over

recent months, he has still been reluctant to deploy playmakers Isco and James Rodriguez in tandem.

Spain international Isco was linked with a move to Manchester City this week, but his coach would not rule out a future for both players at the Bernabeu.

He said: "I'm not going to talk about next season. Yes, they are compatible because they are two excellent footballers, so of course they can play together."

Goal



'I still believe I've got a future at Liverpool'

LONDON - Jon Flanagan may have been cast aside by Jurgen Klopp at Liverpool in 2016-17, but the England international is adamant that he has a future at Anfield.

After enduring his fair share of injury troubles, the hard-working full-back was allowed to link up with Burnley on a season-long loan last summer.

He has been restricted to a bit-part role with the Clarets, due to the performance of others and further fitness issues, but is part of a Premier League squad.

Flanagan believes he is heading in the right direction and that he can follow in the footsteps of the likes of Steven

Gerrard and Jamie Carragher and become a home-grown hero on Merseyside.

He told the Liverpool Echo: "There's a lot of competition but that was the case before when I was playing regularly for Liverpool. I want to get back to that.

"I still believe I've got a future at Liverpool. I'm not thinking about moving on. You have to be confident in your own ability and I'm ready for the fight."

Flanagan added ahead of a Premier League clash between his parent club and loan employers that will see him ineligible for selection: "I've got a job to do for Burnley until the end of the season but after that I want to go back and

prove what I'm all about at Liverpool.

"One of my greatest strengths is my self-belief. What I've done in the past is change people's opinions of me and force my way into a very good Liverpool team. "I've shown that I can perform at the highest level. I am more than confident of doing the same again. I still feel like I've got a lot to offer. I am really excited and looking forward to the challenge."

Flanagan made his senior debut for Liverpool in April 2011, but has only been able to take his appearance tally to 50 in all competitions across the five seasons which have followed.

Goal



'The EFL Cup is not enough'

MANCHESTER - Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho believes the gap between his side's potential and expectations at Old Trafford is a tough one to bridge.

Mourinho took charge of the 20-time English champions after Louis van Gaal stepped down at the end of last season.

The reigns of David Moyes and Van Gaal, even allowing for last year's FA Cup triumph, marked a significant downturn from Sir Alex Ferguson's glorious reign at Old Trafford.

United won the first silverware of the English season by beating Southampton 3-2 in the EFL Cup final at Wembley last month and they head to Chelsea in the quarter-finals of the FA Cup tomorrow, with their interest in the Europa League on-going. Nevertheless, they lie a distant sixth as Chelsea race clear at the top of the Premier League and Mourinho feels ready to settle in for the long haul, with plenty of work still to be done.

Speaking to BBC Football Focus, he said: "I work a lot but that's what I like. I love the club. I feel that I am here for much

more time because the connection is so good with everyone.

"The hard part is the expectation because of the club's history. I am also a little bit guilty of it because I am used to winning trophies in every club. "The relationship between our true potential and the expectations, there is a gap and that gap is the most difficult thing."

Thursday's 1-1 draw against Rostov in the last-16 of the Europa League, with a return at Old Trafford to come next week, underlines the strain United's current schedule places on United's squad but the manager is not content with one major honour. "We are happy with the trophy, a trophy is always important," he said. "The reality is that many other teams in England are going to finish the season without a trophy and we have won the EFL Cup and the Community Shield [beating Leicester City 2-1 in August].

"We are in the quarter-final of the FA Cup but we have to fight for everything. The EFL Cup is not enough for us to say the season is over in February."

Goal

Verratti nightclub rumours 'completely false', states agent

PARIS - Marco Verratti's agent has hit out at reports that the Paris Saint-Germain star was seen exiting a nightclub after midnight in the build-up to the Ligue 1 giants' Champions League meeting with Barcelona at Camp Nou.

Leading 4-0 going into that encounter, there was a feeling that PSG had done enough to progress through to the quarter-finals, but Barca staged an unprecedented comeback to win the tie 6-5 on aggregate.

The fallout in France has been dramatic, with some sources in France claiming that the Italian was spotted out on the town on the eve of the encounter. These reports have been vehemently denied by his representative, though.

"I don't want to get into the relationship with PSG but what's cer-

tain is that which was written by l'Equipe is completely false," Donato Di Campli told Radio Crc. "We will pursue legal action and we are studying which path to follow.

"The image of Verratti is sacred and we will not allow anyone to tarnish it. It's one thing to criticise the boy technically but it's another to get into personal issues, saying things that are absolutely untrue."

Verratti has been linked with a move back to Italy in recent months, with Inter and Juventus among the interested parties, but these rumours too have also been dismissed. "Inter? Marco has a contract until 2021 with PSG and it will have to be the club to tell us to leave because we're fine [in Paris]. We have nothing to say on other things," he concluded.

Goal

DOMINANT EVERTON CRUISE PAST WEST BROM

LONDON - Goals from Kevin Mirallas, Morgan Schneiderlin, and Romelu Lukaku gave Everton a comfortable 3-0 home win over West Brom.

Ronald Koeman's side have now not dropped a point at Goodison Park since a loss to rivals Liverpool prior to Christmas after this success over a West Brom team only one place beneath them in the table, but a class below here.

With Tottenham in FA Cup action this weekend, Lukaku had the chance to join Kane at the top of the division's scorers chart.

Opportunity knocked when Gareth Barry rolled a pass into the big Belgian in the 16th minute yet for once Lukaku put his shot the wrong side of the post, as he did when he rose to meet a Leighton Baines cross moments later.

The visitors had not threatened a back line featuring Phil Jagielka as a starter for the first time in 2017 until six minutes before the break when Nacer Chadli's effort from distance was tipped around the post by Joel Robles.

At the other end the weak link in the Baggies' defence had looked like being Allan Nyom and it was in the left-back's vicinity where the move for the hosts' opener emerged.

Lukaku drifted out to the right and saw his pass inside ricochet off a couple of Baggies defenders before falling to Ross Barkley, and though his shot was parried by Ben Foster,



Romelu Lukaku scored his 19th Premier League goal of the campaign to set a new club record in the competition for a season. (DailyMail)

Mirallas reacted quickest to apply the finish.

Fans

That was quickly added to by a second before the break as Koeman's side entered the interval in charge.

Again it stemmed from Lukaku's inkling to come out to the right and this time he turned inside, fended off Jonny Evans and slipped in Schneiderlin to take a touch beyond Jake Livermore before clipping beyond Foster.

His maiden Everton goal, and his first in 511 days, made the interval all the sweeter for the home support, including boxer Tony Bellew,

who came on to the pitch to receive a round of applause from his fellow Evertonians a week on from his victory over David Haye.

It was at the mid-point of that bout that the advantage turned in Bellew's favour when Haye picked up an injury, though there was little chance of a similarly-timed momentum swing for the Baggies despite Baines' withdrawal ahead of the second half.

And Chadli's shot which was spilled out by Robles and cleared by Ashley Williams was all the Baggies could muster up.

The tepid pace did give Tom Davies and Barkley a chance to shine in

front of watching England boss Gareth Southgate, and the latter could have furthered his case had his twisting and turning culminated in anything other than a shot into the side netting.

However, there was still time for him to make the highlights package when he delivered the back-post cross that Lukaku nodded home in the 82nd minute as Nyom once again lost his man.

Substitute Idrissa Gueye was denied a fourth by the woodwork and this was as comfortable and routine as Koeman could have hoped for.

Teamtalk

Niasse double is Hull's Silva lining

HULL CITY - Oumar Niasse proved an inspired substitution by Marco Silva as his second-half double boosted Hull's hopes of retaining their Premier League status with a 2-1 win over fellow strugglers Swansea yesterday.

Niasse, on loan from Everton, struck in the 69th and 78th minutes to give Hull their third win over Swansea this season -- their other win coming in the FA Cup -- and saw them rise to third from bottom just a point off Crystal Palace, although the latter have a game in hand.

Swansea -- who have lost seven of their last 11 games -- remain firmly embroiled in the battle for survival just three points clear of Hull.

Chances were few and far between in a tight opening half hour with just one piece of creative wizardry by Swansea's playmaker Gylfi Sigurdsson teeing up Wayne Routledge, whose shot was on target but well saved by Eldin Jakupovic. The visitors dominated the match even though they created little in the way of scoring opportunities -- Fernando Llorente being well-marshalled by the Hull defence -- but their rhythm was disrupted when Angel Rangel had to go off injured to be replaced by Jordi Amat. Even worse for the Swans was the sight of Llorente trudging off injured just before the break after coming off worse in a collision with Tom Huddlestone.

Huddlestone scuffed a great chance to give the hosts the lead shortly after the restart, Lukasz Fabianski getting down well to save.

Routledge had Swansea manager Paul Clement wringing his hands in despair as shortly afterwards he skied over the bar from close range with Jakupovic out of position. Silva then made the crucial call to remove Alfred N'Diaye and send on Niasse largely because the former was close to getting sent off after bringing down Sigurdsson. **AFP**

Dominant Bayern move 10 points clear at the top

MUNICH - Bayern Munich moved 10 points clear at the top of the Bundesliga after cruising to a 3-0 win over Eintracht Frankfurt at the Allianz Arena.

As the match started Frankfurt made their intentions early by sitting deep into their own half.

Arjen Robben and Arturo

with the cross and powered a header into the back of the net, 2-0.

The match went into the interval with Bayern leading 2-0.

Frankfurt would have been disappointed conceding two goals in a space of five minutes late in the first half after playing well in holding them up to the 38th

minute.

Bayern's patience paid off and were clinical enough to go into the break with a two goal lead.

Lewandowski made it 3-0 in the 55th minute controlling a deep cross, before finding the back of the net.

Bayern were now cruising and took the fight out of Frankfurt with their clinical finishing. They did, however, maintain the tempo of the match and were going for more goals.

However, the score remained 3-0 as the referee brought a close to the second-half proceedings.

AFP



King bags hat-trick as Bournemouth down West Ham

BOURNEMOUTH - A Joshua King hat-trick gave Bournemouth a dramatic 3-2 win over West Ham after a hugely eventful afternoon at the Vitality Stadium.

The in-form marksman took his tally to eight goals in his last seven games despite having earlier missed a penalty.

In fact Bournemouth, who had scored all seven of their previous spot-kicks

this season, managed to fluff two in the space of half an hour after Benik Afobe assumed responsibility with the same result.

But ultimately it did not matter as King hit a last-minute winner to complete his treble, cancelling out strikes from Michail Antonio and Andre Ayew to secure their first success of the year at the ninth attempt.

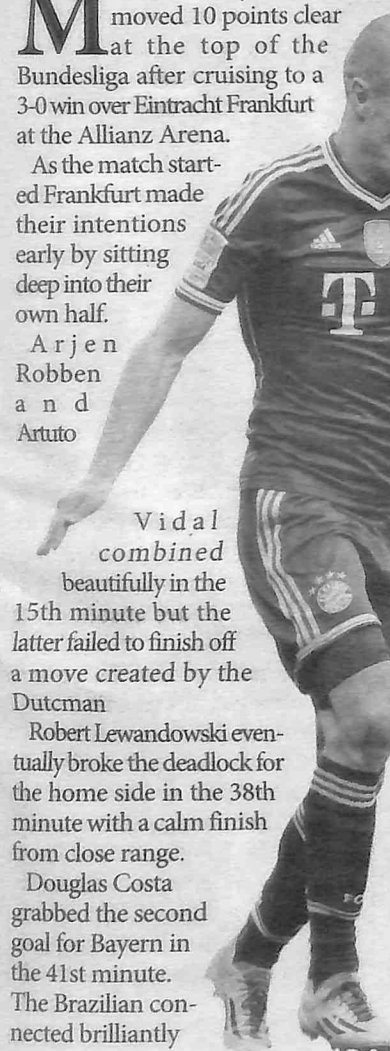
The Cherries were gifted the chance to take the lead after only eight min-

utes when Sofiane Feghouli needlessly hauled down Charlie Daniels in the area and ref Bobby Madley pointed to the spot.

But King sidefooted his penalty horribly wide -- and just 48 seconds later West Ham had the ball in the net.

It was not down to a lightning counter-attack, though, but a mistake by Harry Arter, who gave the ball away to Feghouli on the edge of the box.

Daily Mail





CAF CONFEDERATION CUP:

MBABANE SWALLOWS VS AZAM FC

PREVIEW



'BIRDS' IN QUEST TO FLY SWAZI FLAG HIGH IN TANZANIA

Azam FC vs Mbabane Swallows
Azam Complex Stadium, Das Es Salaam (Tanzania) 6.30pm

The country's Total CAF Confederations Cup envoys, Mbabane Swallows, will meet Tanzania giants Azam Football Club under floodlights at the Azam Complex Stadium.

This will be Swallows' first participation at this stage of the tournament after successfully making it through, for the first time in four attempts. The capital city giants beat Botswana's Orapa

United in the preliminary round and the nation is hoping the team will continue raising the country's flag high in Tanzania.

The team is fresh from a disappointing Swazi Bank Cup round of 16 defeat at the hands of National First Division outfit Matsapha United, but is expected to pull up a good fight though this game is on a completely different level.

With an almost injury free squad, with the exception of defender Colani 'Tyson' Magagula and winger Phathizwe Sacolo, who have both been ruled out of the tie due to injuries, the

'Beautiful Birds' will be parading an equally capable team that already knows the magnitude of playing on foreign soil.

Birds coach Thabo 'Koki' Vilakati will be pinning on his trusted troops to come out of their laurels and put up a good fight against the Tanzanian side. The battalion comprises of seasoned players in skipper Tony 'TT' Tsabedze, Wonder 'Samba Jive' Nhleko, Sabelo 'Sikhali' Ndzinisa, Njabulo 'D4D' Ndlovu and the Kinshasa born grafter Papy Kabamba to try and salvage something out of this tricky away clash, before

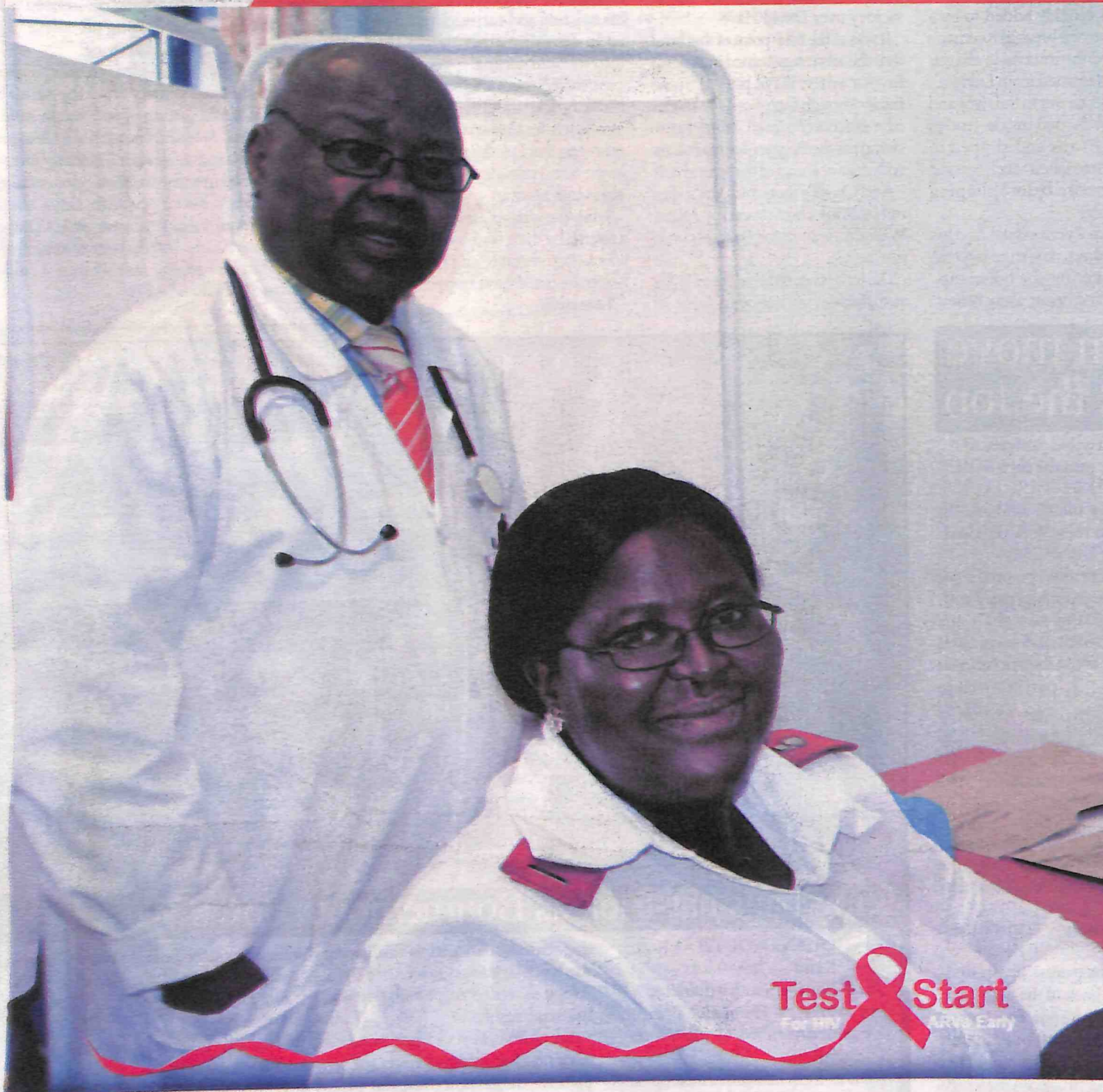
wrapping it here at home next weekend during the return leg.

Vilakati also needs to organise his defensive line marshalled by Siphamandla Mathenjwa and Mandla

Palma to try and stop the Azam striking force, which is a closed book to the local side. There is no more turning back, go for war *Mkhonto Ka-Shaka* and continue to be the darlings of the passionate Swazi nation, which will be fully behind you in prayers.



Sikhonela Wena... Shesha Ucale Ema ARVs.



Probable starting XI

1. Sandile 'Nkomishi' Ginindza
2. Sifiso Mabila
3. Sanele Mkheweli
4. Mandla Palma
5. Siphamandla Mathenjwa
6. Papy Kabamba
7. Wonder 'Samba Jive' Nhleko
8. Banele 'Pupu' Sikhondze
9. Sabelo 'Sikhali' Ndzinisa
10. Njabulo 'D4D' Ndlovu
11. Tony 'TT' Tsabedze.

Tony 'TT' Tsabedze



MTN Premier League 2016/17

PICTURES

MBABANE HIGHLANDERS VS TAMBUTI FC AT MAYALUKA



Tambuti supporters in a jovial mood after their 2-1 win against Highlanders.

Tambuti's Gabriel Goshen blocking Highlanders' skipper Xolani 'Chocco' Sibandze.
(Pics: Sabelo Majola)



Tambuti skipper Mpendulo Ngidi celebrating the team's first goal with Bhekinkosi Mlotsa.

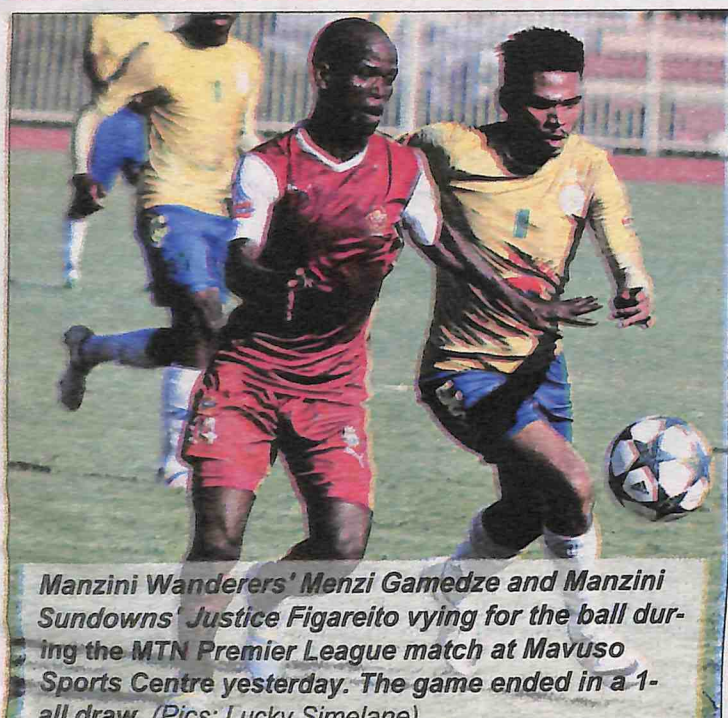


Tambuti's second goal scorer Fabrice Mopina controlling the ball.



Tambuti's Bhekinkosi Mlotsa scoring the team's first goal.

Manzini Wanderers vs Manzini Sundowns



Manzini Wanderers' Menzi Gamedze and Manzini Sundowns' Justice Figareito vying for the ball during the MTN Premier League match at Mavuso Sports Centre yesterday. The game ended in a 1-1 draw. (Pics: Lucky Simelane)



Sundowns' Mlamuli Nkambule winning the ball from Wanderers' Samkeliso Mhlanga, Mfanafuthi 'Taribo' Bhembe and Tawana Chikore.



Wanderers players celebrating their equalising goal.



Out on bail Mbabane Swallows fan Linda 'Sithawula' Tsela was also spotted at Mavuso Sports Centre. Tsela allegedly stabbed a Wanderers fan two weeks ago.

MTN Premier League 2016/17

Sea Birds in a must-win clash against Green Mamba

Green Mamba vs
Manzini Sea Birds
Somhlolo National Stadium,
3.30pm

BY SABELO MAJOLA

A wounded tiger is a dangerous beast and so one should tread carefully around the creature. These are words directed to Correctional Services side Green Mamba, who will up against basement side Manzini Sea Birds this afternoon at Somhlolo National Stadium.

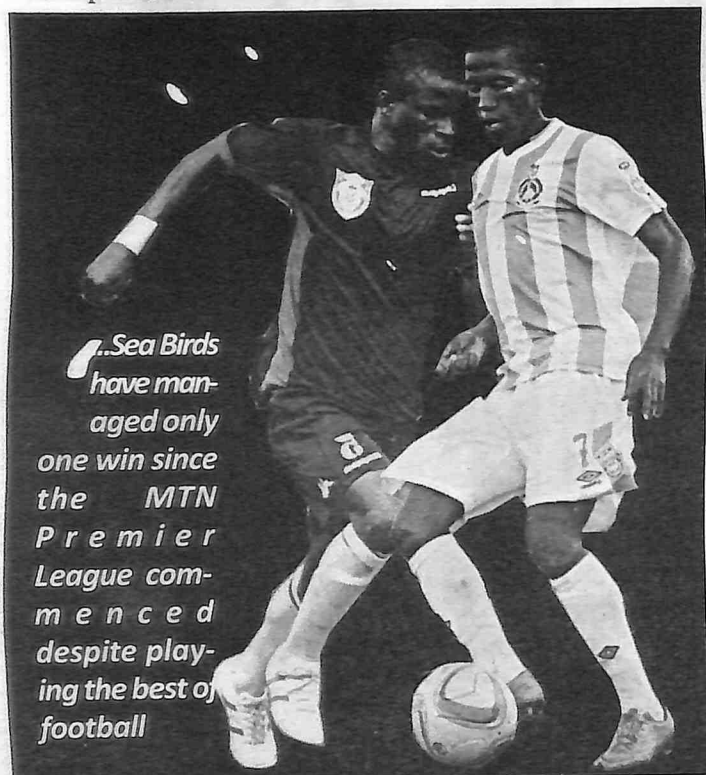
Sea Birds have managed only one win since the MTN Premier League commenced and despite playing the best of football, they have just been unlucky in front of goal, scoring only a dozen, four less than the number of games they have played. With only six games remaining before the league comes to a close, there is no glimpse of light at the end of the tunnel for the club who are on seven points, five below Red Lions

who are above them. Adding salt to the wound is their recent elimination from the SwaziBank Cup at the hands of Mbabane Highlanders hence their clash with Green Mamba today will be revenge mission against the wounded side.

Sitting at the stomach of the log, Green Mamba are less worried about relegation, even though they are not spared mathematically. The Harries 'Madze' Bulungale charges have three times the number of points that their opponents today have.

They will also be looking to repair their tainted image after crashing out of the Swazi Bank Cup at the hands of Tambuti.

Even though Sea Birds' only victory in the campaign came through defeating Green Mamba in the fourth string of the league games, this is one unpredictable clash that can either give light to one end or cause more misery for the Manzini based outfit.



Sea Birds have managed only one win since the MTN Premier League commenced despite playing the best of football

MPs CALL FOR IMPROVED REWARDS IN LOCAL MARATHONS

STORIES BY SABELO MAJOLA

SPORTS - Members of Parliament (MPs) have called for improved prize money in local marathons.

The MPs raised the matter during the Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Portfolio Committee budget debate held at the House of Assembly on Friday.

The MPs said it was high time that the prize money be lucrative as athletics was proving to be a career for some sports personalities.

Mangcongco MP Patrick 'Pha' Motsa made reference to the popular South African Comrades Marathon where the winner normally pockets over E100 000 in prize monies.

He said the same approach should be



employed in local races both for motivation and also improving the sport for the better. "So far the only race in the country that has good prizes is the Imbube Marathon. I would like to implore the ministry to look into improving the rewards in all the other races because

some of our athletes make a living out of running," he said. Motsa also highlighted on lack of security at Somhlolo, especially at the pay points. He recommended that football authorities should introduce electronic tickets as this would ensure easy entry into stadiums.

Sports Bill tabling taking too long

SPORTS - The tabling of the Sports Bill was one of the issue that was of concern to the Members of Parliament during the ministry's budget debate on Friday.

The MPs argued that the Sports Bill was taking too long to be tabled before the House of Assembly for debating.

Raising the concern was former Swaziland National Sports and recreations Council Chairman Nkhamba MP Menzi Dlamini who, asked why the Bill was taking long to be tabled for debate

by legislators. He said they would have no choice but to raise a motion on the tabling of the Bill if the situation continues. "The Sports Bill should have been brought to the House before the budget of the year is approved. It should be looked into and debated but there it is still stalling and that is not good. If we have to raise a motion on its tabling, then we will do just that," he said.

The MP was echoed by LaMgabhi MP Siculo Jele. He said it was of great of importance that the Bill be brought for-

ward so it could be implemented. The MP also wanted to know from the ministry how the country would benefit from the visit of FIFA President Gianni Infantino. "The FIFA president visited the country recently and we want to know if his visit will be of benefit to our football. The former president Sepp Blatter once visited the country and we saw the implementation of FIFA Goal projects soon after that. I would want to know if we should expect the same this time around," he said.

Correctional too strong for Manzini Ladies in SBS League chairman

BY SIBUSISO MASILELA

NETBALL - Defending champions Correctional started the league on a high after thrashing Manzini Ladies 82-26.

This was during the Swaziland Building Society E100 000 league games played at the Zakhele courts yesterday.

This was the team's second victory after beating Mbabane Raiders during the grand opening games of the league.

The green and white side was a like a

house on fire as they walked over the opposition, which was playing their first game of the season, following the cancellation of their opening match against Sports and Culture last weekend.

Support

Manzini Ladies struggled to find rhythm throughout the match, allowing Correctional to dominate proceedings. Other matches that were still to play at the same venue included the battle of the two regions between Buhleni and Nhlanguano and the tricky match

between USDF and Sports&Culture.

National Netball Association of Swaziland (NNAS) Public Relations Officer Nhlanguhla Mayisela said they were happy with the progress of the games.

He said the association would release the log standings today.

"Everything has been going well since the opening games last week. We are looking forward to great and exciting action next weekend. We would also like to thank supporters for supporting these games," he said.

Red Lions coach 'DU' over the moon

BY SIBUSISO MASILELA

SOCCER - Red Lions coach Dumisani 'DU' Makhanya was nothing but full of praise for his charges after their 2-1 victory over Royal Leopard.

In a post-match interview with the coach at the Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday, he congratulated the players for a job well done during the game.

The National U-17 assis-

tant coach said his charges deserved all the credit as they fought hard to record their first ever victory over the police service outfit.

"I would like to thank my players for their commitment throughout the game. They showed character and coming from a goal down was a sign of determination from my players."

"We still need to continue working hard, especially with our striking force which seems to be struggling. We will put up a

good fight in the remaining league games and will treat each one like a cup final for us," he said.

Meanwhile his Royal Leopard counterpart Sifiso 'Nuro' Ntibane attributed their loss to lack of luck.

"We had a bad day in the office. We switched off at the back at a crucial stage of the match. We also failed to utilise our chances in the match, especially in the first half and we ended up being punished," he said.



TAMBUTI GORE RELEGATION THREATENED 'BULL'

BY SABELO MAJOLA

Tambuti..... (1)2
Highlanders..... (0)1

SOCCER- Mbabane Highlanders seem to be starring relegation in the face after succumbing to a 1-2 defeat at the hands of Tambuti at Mayaluka Stadium yesterday.

The confident Lubombo based side showed The 'Black Bull' no respect as they calmly navigated the visitors' defence, to cause more upset for the struggling side.

The result sees 'Landers' drop to the second from bottom position on the log, giving way to Red Lions, who moved one place up after triumphing over Royal Leopard at Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday.

The host team broke the deadlock as early as 18 minutes into the game through Bhengkosi Mlota, who netted past the goalkeeper Sidumo Vilakati after being awarded a pass on a silver platter, following a miscommunication by the 'Bull' defence and goalkeeper. Highlanders were unfortunate not to level matters nine minutes later as Tambuti's goalkeeper Thokozani



Mkhulisi made a superb save, to deny Menzi Sithole on a one-on-one situation. Mkhulisi came to the party and again denied Sithole in the same fashion in the half hour mark. 'Landers' were left lamenting lost chances as Tambuti doubled the score five minutes from the break through Fabrice Mopina, whose top corner shot was too much for Vilakati to deal with making it 2-0 for his side.

Highlanders introduced Mzwandile 'Navara' Ndzimandze in place of Sicelo Simelane and the latter was brought down in the box in the last quarter of the game. Landers top goal scorer Mohammed Sabela took the responsibility but his penalty was saved, only for him to net at the rebound.

TEAMS

Tambuti

Thokozani, Sanele, Ishmael, Machawe, Siboniso, Gabriel, Simanga, Zwakele, Mpendulo, Bhengkosi (Colani), Fabrice.

Highlanders

Sidumo, Manqoba, Thabo, Peter (Sifiso), Cosmas, Mzomuhle, Sicelo (Mzwandile), Ndumiso, Mohammed, Menzi (Sifiso) Xolani

Highlanders tried unsuccessfully to find the equaliser and the game ended 2-1 in favour of the host team, which booted them out in the last eight games of the Ingwenyama Cup over a month ago.

Ndebele header sinks Buffaloes

BY SIBUSISO MASILELA

Midas City (0)1
Young Buffaloes (0)0

SOCCER - A Hloniphani Ndebele second half goal was all that Midas City needed to beat Young Buffaloes 1-0 at the Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday.

The seasoned Zimbabwean winger headed home a Linda Msibi free kick in the 78th minutes to outfox the army side and keep the sides' hopes of securing a top eight finish in the MTN Premier League alive.

Buffaloes had an upper hand in the match in the first half of the clash as they pressed the opposition hard but failed to break the deadlock.

Towering striker Phiwa Dlamini saw his header going wide after meeting a skipper Mphile 'Nyandoro' Tsabedze cross in the 24th minute. Midas City had an almost quite first half and were unfortunate in the 16th minute when Ndebele ballooned his effort wide after being set up by Mthunzi Mota.

The Dominic Kunene-led troops continued to dominate even in the second stanza but were let down by poor decision making inside the box.

Midfielder Sihlangu Mkhwanazi could have done better in the 51st minute but he failed to convert a Sandile Gamedze header. Gamedze

THE TEAMS

City

Machawe, Simphiwe Makhanya, Mthunzi, Ndumiso Ndaba (Simphiwe Makhanya), Jomo, Buhle, Khetho, Njabulo (Spider), Bruce (Linda), Simanga, Ndebele,

Buffaloes

Phumlani, Linda, Wandile, Samkeliso, Siboniso, Mphile, Karas, Ndoda (Timothy), Sandile (Mshengu), Sihlangu (Mzwandile), Phiwa.

suffered a similar fate four minutes later when he failed to finish off a well placed pass from the skipper 'Nyandoro' Tsabedze.

The two coaches Caleb Ngwenya and Dominic Kunene exhausted all their substitutes on the day with City bringing in Linda Msibi for Bruce Seyama, and Simphiwe Manana for the injured Ndumiso Ndaba who collided with his teammate Mthunzi Mota, sustaining a head injury.

Buffaloes tried to salvage something out of the match by bringing in the likes of Timothy 'Timo' Mathonsi, and striker Nhlhla 'Mshengu' Kunene in the place of Ndoda Mthethwa and Sandile Gamedze.

Their efforts were however in vain, as 'City' held on to the lead until the final whistle taking home the three points at the expense of the much fancied opposition.

'Amabhubesi' stun Leopard to ease relegation woes

BY SIBUSISO MASILELA

Royal Leopard (0)1
Red Lions (0)2

SOCCER- Fairview based side Red Lions eased off their relegation worries after a hard fought 2-1 win over Royal Leopard at the Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday.

Like a hungry lion in the wilderness, Amabhubesi showed character and zeal, as they came from a goal down to beat the police ensemble, putting themselves above the drop zone with 15 points.

The Dumisani 'DU' Makhanya led troops recorded their first ever victory against Leopard through second half goals from Muntu Mamba and Enzo Mota. The goals cancelled out

THE TEAMS

Leopard

Mphikeleli, Sizwe, Chaka, Phumlani, Machawe, Rocco, Nyasa (Man yovu), Papi, Phumlani (General), Lungelo, Tokyo (Mzoro). Red

Lions

Mbongeni, Ntokozo, Mphumuti, Mthokozisi Nkambule, Kwere, Sande, Senzo (Enzo), Mthokozisi Hlatshwako, Mabelesa (Mvubu), Muntu, Oladele.

a Lungelo Tsabedze 64th minute strike, who gave the police side a lead. The former Highlanders player had finished off a Siboniso 'Rocco' Malambe long ball, to beating an advancing Red

Lions goalkeeper Mbongeni Mota.

Leopard's joy was however short-lived as Red Lions found the equaliser through the bulky Mamba two minutes later. The striker beat veteran Leopard goalkeeper Mphikeleli Dlamini with a looping shot on a one-on-one situation. The red and white ensemble collected the much needed maximum points at the stroke of death following a free kick by Mota, who beat the opposition goalkeeper hands down.

The freekick was awarded after Siboniso Malambe fouled Mthokozisi Hlatshwako at the edge of the box. The goal dented Leopard hopes of second spot finish as they wasted chances, especially in the first half, where the likes of Lungelo and Phumlani Shabangu squandered golden chances inside the box.

MARUWA HOPEFUL 'BULL' WILL EVADE RELEGATION

BY SABELO MAJOLA

SOCCER- Mbabane Highlanders head coach Hebert Maruwa is not feeling the relegation pressure just yet and is hopeful that things will change for the better.

Interviewed after their 1-2 defeat to Tambuti at the Mayaluka Stadium in Big Bend yesterday, the coach pinned the loss on missed chances.

The coach stated that the league was now at a crucial stage and all the teams were giving up a good fight.

"We created enough scoring chances but couldn't convert and were punished. We made mistakes at the back and the opposition capitalised on this. We are still in the fight and will keep fighting until the end," he said.

Meanwhile Tambuti coach Alou Badara praised his charges for a job

well done, saying they deserved it after putting up a brave fight in the field of play.

"The players were tactically disciplined and the game plan was perfectly executed. We are dangerous at home. You don't just win here, but have to sweat. I told the boys to relax and had no pressure coming to this game and we would continue working hard," he said.

'BIRDS' OFFICIALLY UNCROWNED LEAGUE CHAMPS

BY QONDILE NTIWANE

SOCCER - Despite not even kicking a ball in the MTN Premier League this weekend, Mbabane Swallows are officially the uncrowned champions.

This follows Young Buffaloes' 0-1

loss to Midas City at the Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday. Mbabane Swallows occupy the top spot with 48 points while Buffaloes remain on 30 points.

Even if Buffaloes win all their remaining games, they will end at 45 points, which is three points less than

the 'Beautiful Birds' who will play their next game against Moneni Pirates. Swallows are away in Tanzania where they face Azam FC in the first leg of the CAF Confederation Cup clash slated for Azam Complex Stadium starting at 6.30pm, local time.



Yet another stalemate in hub derby

BY SIBUSISO DLAMINI

Sundowns..... (1)1
Wanderers..... (1)1

SOCCER - The hub derby pitting Manzini Wanderers against Manzini Sundowns produced yet another stalemate yesterday.

The clash, which has become synonymous with stalemates for the past four seasons yesterday proved to be no exception as they played to a 1-all draw at the Mavuso Sports Centre. The 'Weslans' came into the game missing three players being workaholic Kola Aladeon, captain Lwazi 'Shana' Maziya and youngster Wethu 'Bholoja' Vilakati who were ruled out due to injuries.

It was Sundowns who created the first chance in of the game when dribbling wizard Darren 'Dazza' outsmarted two Wanderers defenders before giving an inch perfect cross to Ndumiso 'Skhokho' Shongwe. Shongwe however lost his composure and ballooned the ball over the bar, when he had all the time in the world to consider his options.

The 'Kappa' Boys were winning the midfield battle as Justice Figaredo and Mlamuli 'Mlaba' Nkambule proved to be too

much to handle for the 'Weslans'.

Sensing danger, Manzini Wanderers introduced the enterprising Zimbabwean, Tawana Chikore for youngster Kwanele 'Zoo' Dlamini, who was having a bad day at the office in the first half.

The move seemed to be a masterstroke by the 'Nyanga' Crooks Hlophe led technical team as the maroon and white outfit created their first chance in the game two minutes later, with Tawana linking up well with Ayanda Kunene.

Sundowns finally broke the deadlock two minutes before the breather, through Justice Figaredo, who capitalised on poor defending by Menzi Gamedze.

Figaredo, who, aided by a deflection easily scored with a tame effort, sending the keeper the opposite direction.

Sundowns' joy was cut short as the 'Weslans' equalised two minutes later, through Sifiso Matse who scored following brilliant move by Alie Matse and Ayanda on the left flank. The forward made no mistake but calmly slotted a low shot past Sandanezwe Mathabela.

Both teams tried to find the back of the net but were unlucky as they failed to make use of their chances.

FIXTURES

TODAY

English FA Cup		
16:00 Tottenham Hotspur	v	Millwall
Premier League		
18:00 Liverpool	v	Burnley
Nedbank Cup		
15:00 EC Bees	v	Orlando Pirates
15:00 Acombush	v	Cape Town City FC
15:00 Days FC	v	Mbombela United
15:00 Golden Arrows	v	Maritzburg United
Spanish La Liga		
13:00 Real Sociedad	v	Athletic Club
17:15 Deportivo La Coruña	v	Barcelona
19:30 Celta de Vigo	v	Villarreal
21:45 Real Madrid	v	Real Betis

SundayObserver SPORTING

March 12, 2017

ISSN 2411-5886



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MTN LEAGUE UPDATE

MTN PREMIER LEAGUE LOG

Position	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Mbabane Swallows	16	16	0	0	44	7	37	48
Young Buffaloes	17	8	6	3	20	13	7	30
Royal Leopard	17	8	3	6	23	21	2	27
Moneni Pirates	16	7	5	4	23	21	2	26
Manzini Wanderers	17	6	7	4	26	18	8	25
Midas City	17	5	7	5	21	22	-1	22
Manzini Sundowns	17	5	7	5	18	21	-3	22
Green Mamba	16	6	3	7	17	13	4	21
Tambuti	17	5	2	10	15	28	-13	17
Red Lions	17	4	3	10	19	38	-19	15
Mb. Highlanders	17	3	4	8	21	29	-8	14
Sea Birds	16	1	4	11	12	30	-18	7

RESULTS

Manzini Sundowns	1-1	Manzini Wanderers
Tambuti FC	2-1	Mbabane Highlanders
Red Lions	2-1	Royal Leopard
Midas City	1-0	Young Buffaloes

PLAYING TODAY

Somhlolo National Stadium			
Green Mamba	vs	Sea Birds	3:30pm

NATIONAL FIRST DIVISION LOG

Position	P	W	L	D	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Matsapha United	16	12	2	2	41	11	30	38
Malanti Chiefs	16	11	1	4	37	10	27	37
Vovovo	17	9	5	3	28	17	11	30
Madlenya	16	8	6	2	22	17	5	26
Mbabane Citizens	16	8	7	1	24	22	2	25
Hlatikhulu Tycoons	16	6	8	2	19	37	-18	20
Hub Sundowns	17	5	8	4	19	22	-3	19
Amalanda	17	6	10	1	19	29	-10	19
Sikhalo	16	5	9	2	16	20	-4	17
Bad Boys	16	4	6	6	17	29	-12	17
City Warriors	16	3	9	3	15	29	-14	13
Ludze. Brothers	16	3	9	4	15	33	-18	13

FRIDAY

RESULTS

Hub Sundowns	2-1	Vovovo
Yesterday		
Mbabane Citizens	2-1	Amalanda

PLAYING TODAY

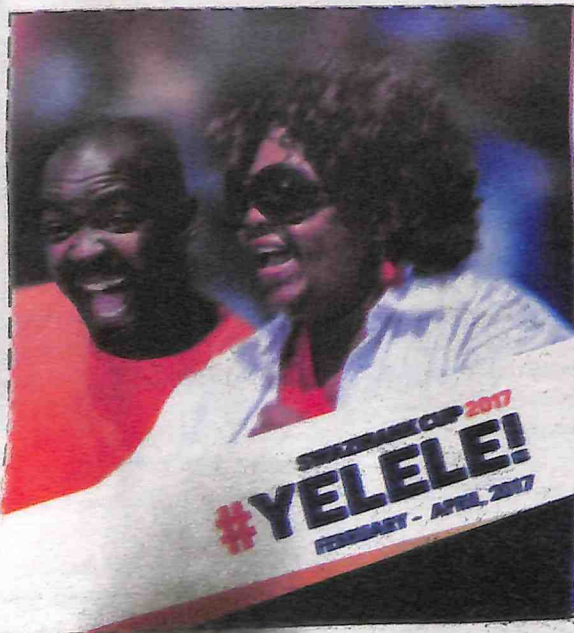
Somhlolo National Stadium			
Ludzeludze Brothers	vs	Madlenya	1:30pm
Mavuso Sports Centre			
Bad Boys	vs	Matsapha United	3pm
Mayaluka Stadium			
City Warriors	vs	Hlatikhulu Tycoons	1:30pm
Sikhalo Se-Africa	vs	Malanti Chiefs	3:30pm

RELEGATION WOES DEEPEN AS:

'BULL' CRUMBLE AGAINST TAMBUTI

...Lubombo based outfit record 2-1 victory against struggling Mbabane giants while Red Lions, Midas City stun Leopard and Buffaloes, respectively.

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WIN E20,000 IN CASH

PREDICT THE CHAMPIONS

Consolation prizes: 5 x E500 cash prizes. SwaziBank and Swazi Observer employees as well as contestants under the age of 18 years are NOT eligible to enter competition.

Deadline:	26 April 2017
1 st Prize	E10,000
2 nd Prize	E5,000
3 rd Prize	E2,500

Drop entry form at any Swazi Observer office or any SwaziBank branch.

Answer.....

Name..... Cell phone.....

Terms & Conditions apply.



N/C