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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS
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MONDAY JANUARY 6, 2020

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SIBEBE POOL 'ROCKS'



BREATHTAKING: The newly opened gigantic swimming pool at Sibebe Resort is attracting large numbers of people who come to enjoy the cool waters and breathtaking view. The resort is planted on top of the Sibebe Rock, which is a tourist attraction as it is the second largest monolith in the world and the largest exposed granite pluton. (Pic: Simon Shabangu)

AFTER 10 YEARS OF DILLY-DALLYING FINALLY...

'GOVT PHASING OUT EPC, JC EXAMS'

● Publication of both results through the media also coming to an end

STORY ON PAGES 2-3

LOCALS HIRE 7 BUSES TO BUSHIRI CROSSOVER

P.7

FSRA
Financial Services Regulatory Authority

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SRA EASES GOVT'S CASHFLOW CHALLENGES

P.3

RAPIST BROTHER SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS

P.6

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Hot week with rains, thunderstorms

BY NONDUDUZO KUNENE
Mbabane

WEATHER forecast issued by Accu Weather Services indicates that the week will be hot and very hot in the lowveld with thunderstorms.

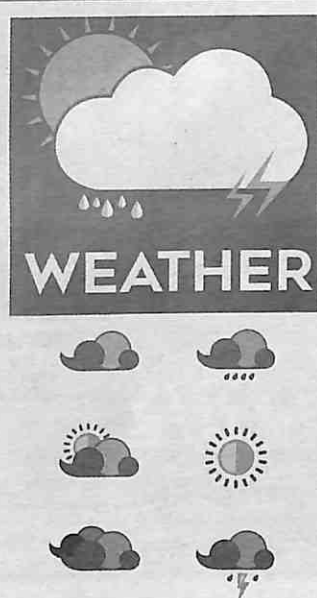
Temperatures are expected to reach 37 Degrees Celsius, making it a very hot week.

Today, morning fog is expected becoming partly cloudy and hot to very hot in lowveld. Caution is advised should one be outside for extended periods of time mainly in the lowveld. Temperatures will range from 19 to 35 Degrees Celsius.

Tomorrow, morning fog's expected at places otherwise it will be cloudy and partly sunny, becoming hot to very hot in the lowveld. Temperatures are expected to rise on Wednesday and they will reach 37 Degree's making it the hottest day of the week. Thunderstorms are expected in the evening mainly in the lowveld.

Occasional showers are expected on Thursday while it will be cloudy and warm in the lowveld.

Today	Mbabane	Mankayane	Manzini	Siteki	Mhlume	Big Bend
19/29	20/30	22/32	21/31	23/33	24/34	
Tomorrow	Mbabane	Mankayane	Manzini	Siteki	Mhlume	Big Bend
17/29	18/3	20/32	19/31	21/33	22/34	
Wednesday	Mbabane	Mankayane	Manzini	Siteki	Mhlume	Big Bend
15/32	16/33	18/35	17/34	19/36	20/37	
Thursday	Mbabane	Mankayane	Manzini	Siteki	Mhlume	Big Bend
19/30	20/31	22/33	21/32	23/34	24/35	



EPC, JC EXAM PHASE OUT THIS YEAR - MINISTER

BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI
Mbabane

MINISTER of Education and Training Lady Howard-Mabuza has announced the phasing out of Eswatini Primary Certificate (EPC) and Junior Certificate (JC) external examinations.

The minister on Friday stated that by the end of the year they would have an alternative assessment model.

Information gathered by this publication indicates that a consensus to phase out these exams was made a decade ago, but the ministry had not found an alternative assessment.

"I can assure you that the ministry is working on the matter. We



NO MORE: Minister of Education and Training Lady Howard-Mabuza.

will find alternative examinations when we phase the external ones because we do not want to let

down Emaswati. I am hopeful that by the end of the year, we will have An alternative examinations,"

she said.

Examinations Council of Eswatini Registrar Dr Edmund Mazibuko said as implementers of the policies made by government, they would support the initiative by the ministry, adding that he believes the ministry will define the Council's role in the new assessment model.

Swaziland Principals Association (SWAPA) President Welcome Mhlanga, on the other hand, said consultations should continue and benchmarking should be concluded before the phasing out of the exams.

"We need to consider the implications and the assessment tools that will be used. The minister cannot just phase the external examinations and leave a vacuum. Furthermore, the debate on



Man stabs wife after she cut his ear off

BY SIZWE DLAMINI
Pigg's Peak

IN a case of domestic violence, a man (39) stabbed his wife (45) after she had cut his ear off during a heated dispute at Nkomazi.

Both husband and wife were admitted at the Pigg's Peak Government Hospital on Friday.

The wife, Andile Sihlongonyane, was stabbed once in the back allegedly by her younger husband Sifiso Maseko with an Okapi.

Maseko is said to have stabbed his wife after Sihlongonyane allegedly cut off a huge chunk of his left

ear.

Speaking to this publication yesterday, sources said the lovebirds were involved in an argument over infidelity.

"The information we have indicates that Maseko, who is younger than his wife, was cheating with another woman of 22 years, who also lives at Nkomazi. Maseko is said to have dated the other woman before he married Sihlongonyane in 2018.

At the time of the marriage, Maseko was unemployed and Sihlongonyane was renting out the family shop at Nkomazi. After the wedding, Maseko took over the

shop while Sihlongonyane ventured into airtime vending," they said.

Entertaining

The sources added that while Sihlongonyane was out selling airtime, Maseko would be entertaining the other woman at his wife's shop.

"Sihlongonyane works a few kilometres away from the shop, selling airtime. While she was at work, her husband Maseko would entertain the other lady, who is reportedly unemployed.

The couple would be seen cuddling at the shop. Soon their affair became public knowledge result-

ing to an angry Sihlongonyane confronting the other woman on Friday and a fight ensued.

Sihlongonyane grabbed a knife and cut Maseko's ear.

"After seeing the blood, Maseko stabbed Sihlongonyane in the back with the same knife. Relatives intervened and stopped the fight before calling the Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The couple was then rushed to hospital," one of the sources said.

Deputy Police Information and Communications Officer Nosipho Mnguni said nothing has been reported to them in relation to the incident.

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the higher school leaving qualification should be concluded before phasing out these external exams," he added.

As per the Education Sector Policy of 2012, the ministry of education already planned to phase out Grade Seven external examinations and instead introduce check points in Grades Four and Seven.

Additionally, the ministry had proposed summative assessment examinations in Forms Three and Five, respectively.

Furthermore, stakeholders who include, among others, the National

Curriculum Centre (NCC), Examinations Council of Eswatini, Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT), Swaziland Principals Association (SWAPA), ministry of education, University of Eswatini (UNESWA) and other tertiary institutions in several consultative meetings, had reached a consensus to phase out these external examinations (EPC and JC).

However, the phasing out of these exams did not happen. The stakeholders questioned the value and necessity of EPC and JC exams.

One of these consultative meetings

was held at UNESWA in 2012, where a document titled Higher School Leaving Qualification was compiled.

As per the document, all the participants agreed that JC should be phased out and replaced with an assessment that would be like a check point.

One of the reasons for the call was the relevance of the JC as an academic achievement for one to gain employment.

Another reason was the cost of these external exams that have become such a burden to parents as the examiners, invigilators and markers have to be paid by the parents and guardians.

The ministry of education justified the delay in phasing out these external exams, citing the need to ensure quality and standardised assessment.

On Friday, Minister Howard Mabuza also informed the media that it was the last time they were publishing the EPC and JC results in the media. She said they would now issue a notice informing the nation of the results.

The reason for doing so may be linked to the decision to do away with the external examination for both EPC and JC.

Themba was a jealous husband — Community members

STORIES BY DELISA THWALA
Manzini

THE community of Mhlaleni has described murder accused, Themba Matsebula as a jealous man.

Matsebula was last week arrested in connection with the murder of his 35-year-old wife Celiwe Nxumalo on New Year's Day.

The community wondered how Matsebula could accuse his wife of being unfaithful because he was the one allegedly dating a number of women in the area.

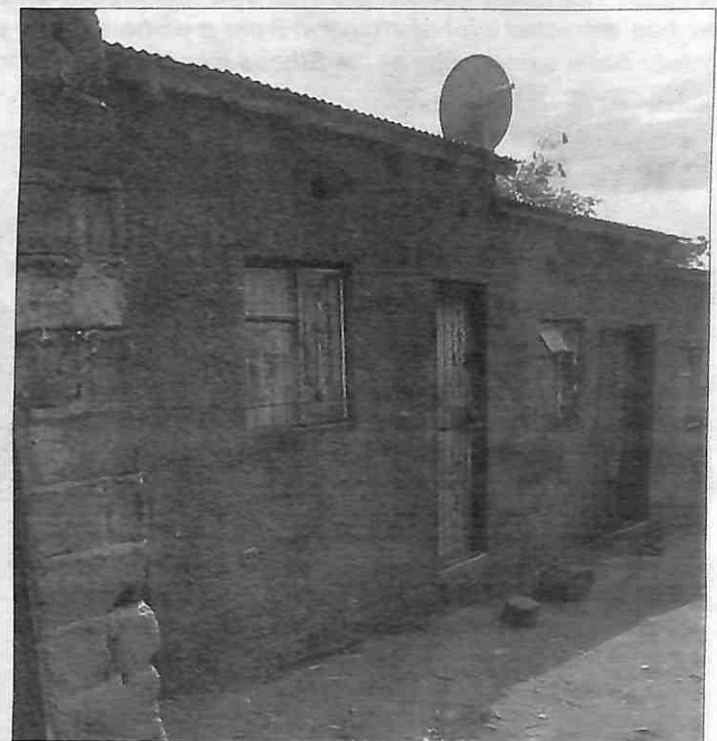
"We are not even sure if his wife

was cheating, but even if she was, Themba could be blamed as he allegedly dated several women all over Mbikwakhe and Yende," said Mandla Sibandze.

Another, who did not mince words stated that Matsebula was a serial cheater.

Cried

He also moved out of their home to continue with his nefarious acts without being disturbed," said Nosipho Malindzisa. Matsebula was charged with murder and he appeared on Thursday at Manzini Magistrate's Court where he confessed to killing his wife because she suddenly was having an affair.



ABODE: The house where Celiwe Nxumalo lived in before being brutally murdered by her husband. (Pic: Delisa Thwala)

She was a beautiful soul, would not hurt a fly- Neighbours

NEIGHBOURS of deceased Celiwe Nxumalo of Mhlaleni have described her as a beautiful soul that would have never hurt a fly.

"She loved her children and everyone in the compound and always avoided conflicts. With her, it was laughter every day," said one neighbour.

Another tenant said her absence was hugely felt, adding that it has been a tough week for them.

"Celiwe was kind and we don't think she was having an extra-marital affair.

However, we cannot speculate because we do not know what happens behind closed doors," explained Gaven.

Details pertaining to Nxumalo's funeral have not been finalised but reliable sources said she would likely be buried at her marital home, Maphungwane.

Family members are still shocked at her brutal murder.

A visit by this publication to where Celiwe resided with her two children who have been moved to Maphungwane, evoked unex-

pressed pain and bitter-sweet memories of the deceased.

The compound had a few people in sight and close relatives were not around, until a woman who chose to identify herself as her aunt was seen at the late Nxumalo's house.

When approached by this publication, the aunt was reluctant to talk. "What do you want? We are grieving here, everything has been published and we would love all the privacy we could get in this matter," said the woman.

She also said she was not sure if Nxumalo would be buried this weekend because as a family, they were still to meet.

A young lad in the compound advised that at the moment nothing had been finalised as they still shocked by the murder incident.

"I think our aunt is still hurt by what his brother did. She had a good relationship with the late Nxumalo

. She has been like this with everyone since Wednesday. She is grieving and taking things badly," said Phila.

SRA EXCEEDS E1.2bn TARGET

BY ZWELETHU DLAMINI
Mbabane

...government cash-flow improves

MINISTER of Finance Neal Rijkenburg said government's cash-flow improved in the last quarter, especially in December 2019.

This is because the Eswatini Revenue Authority (SRA) exceeded the target of E1.2 billion.

The minister revealed this in an interview with this publication last Wednesday.

"The cashflow looks positive and we have been able to meet some obligations and cleared some arrears. This has been evidenced by the impressive tax collection of December 2019 as SRA exceeded the E1.2 billion target. This is a notable achievement compared to that of the other months which vary and do not exceed E800 million," he revealed.

The minister anticipated that the tax collection would further improve in the current year as government has committed to pay owed suppliers by the end of this month, following the approval of the loan solicited for same.

The minister stated that he was impressed with the collections, adding this was an indication that compliance level had improved, hence SRA was able to exceed the target.

SRA Director Communications Vusi Dlamini said from the target of E1.209 billion, they managed to collect E1.218 billion, which is about E9 million more.

He also disclosed that since inception, SRA had seen an improvement in tax revenue collection.



CONFIRMS: SRA Director of Communications, Vusi Dlamini.

The Eswatini Observer has established that this is not the first time SRA exceeded its target. This has been attributed to improved efficiencies in the revenue collection strategies implemented by SRA.

Non-compliant

Last year, Dlamini said even though there were still some non-compliant businesses, generally the level of compliance had improved.

"As the SRA, we would like to thank all those companies and individuals who continuously contribute to the country's fiscus through paying what is due to the state.

We also implore those who may still be in the 'wilderness' to come forward and comply," Dlamini pleaded.

He revealed that SRA had introduced

a number of initiatives such as the voluntary disclosure programme, to encourage taxpayers to comply.

He said the programme allowed the SRA to waive penalties for those businesses that complied and pleaded with those who were non-compliant to take advantage of this.

He stated that for the country's revenue to grow and SRA to achieve its targets the two determining factors were essential.

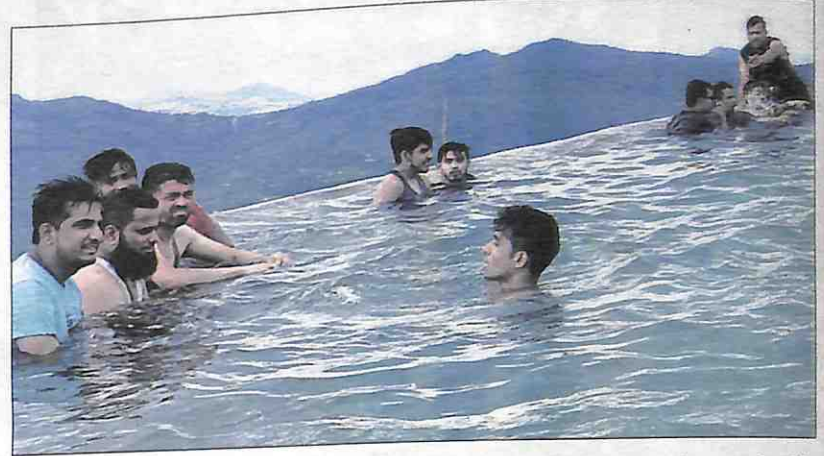
"But most importantly, this depends predominantly on the economic growth of the country and willingness of taxpayers to comply with all SRA administered legislation.

If the economy continues to be sluggish, then tax revenue does not perform well. That is a fact," he said

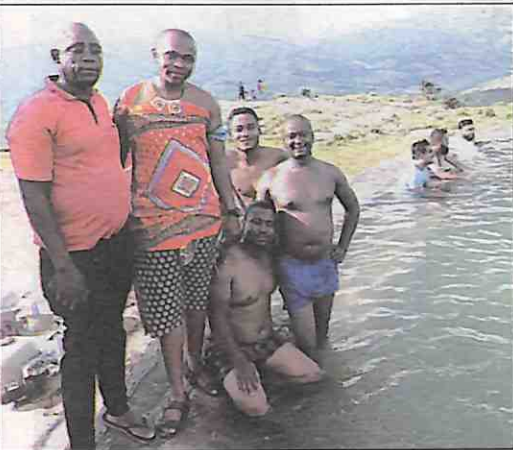
GIGANTIC SWIMMING POOL OPENED @ SIBEBE RESORT



PACKED: The newly opened gigantic swimming pool which boasts of a breathtaking view has attracted a lot of attention from members of the public. People, young and old came to have a good time at the Sibebe Resort. (Pics: Simon Shabangu)



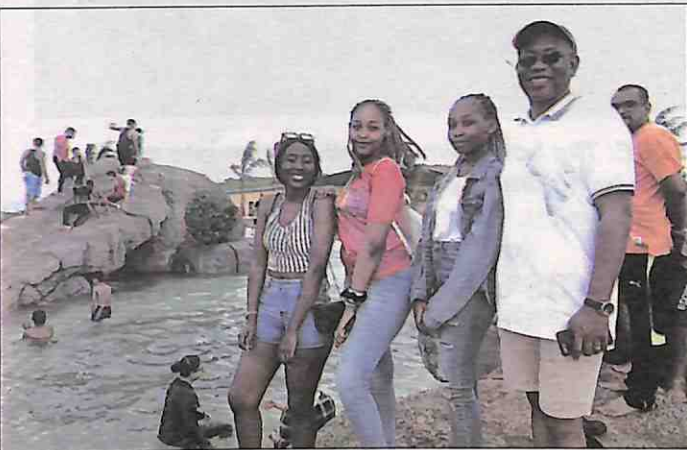
ABOVE AND BELOW: Some of those who came to cool off at the pool.



OUTING: Friends having a good at the swimming pool.

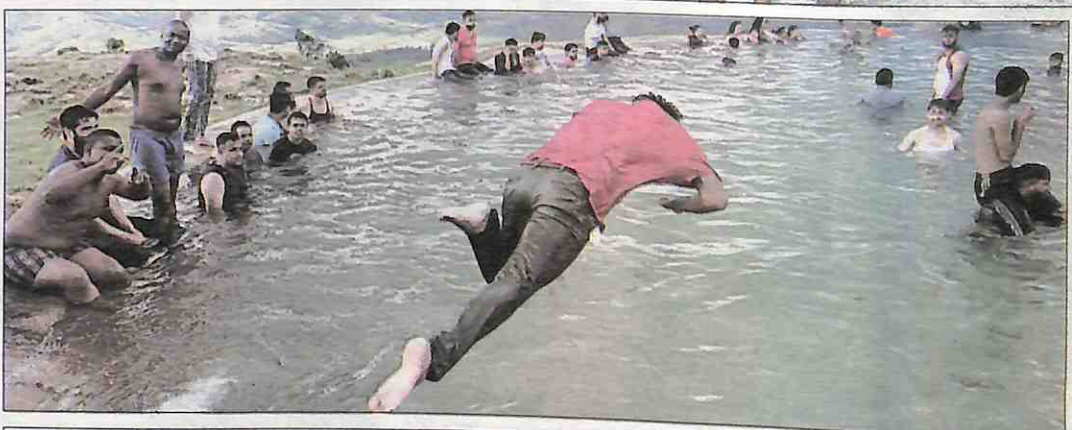
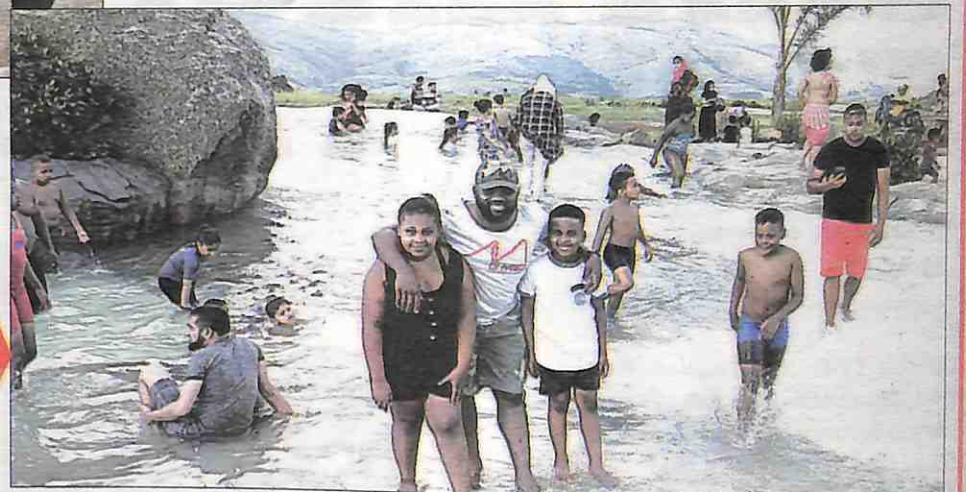


MY FRIENDS: Friends who drove all the way from Manzini posing after enjoying the cool waters.

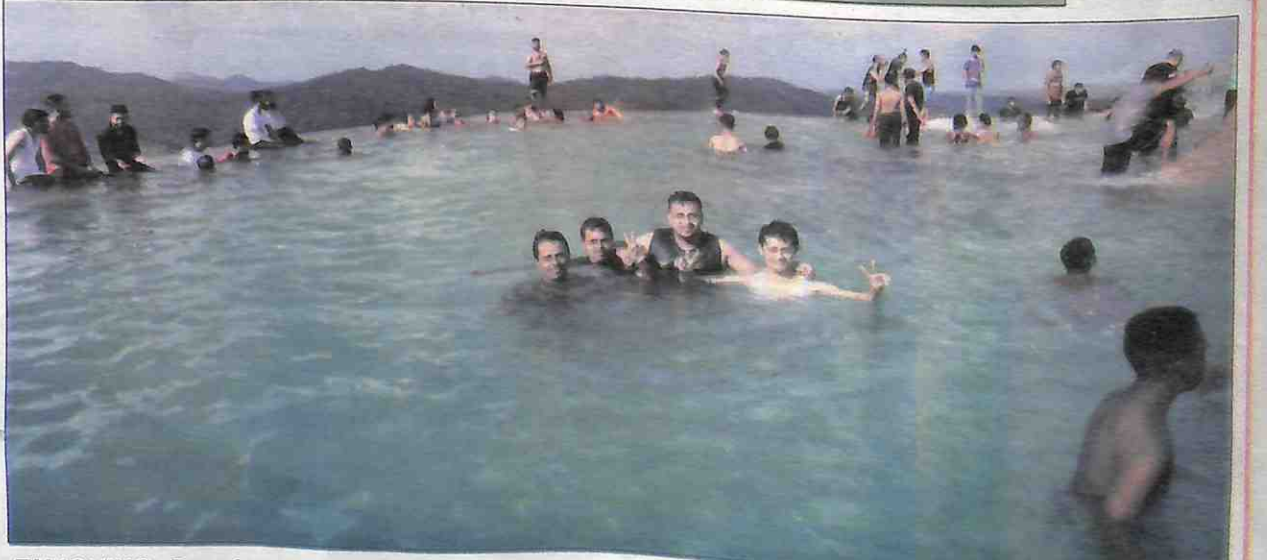


KODAK MOMENT: Jabulani Dlamini from Macetjeni and his children Sihlelelwe, Tiphonke and Tiyandza posing near the pool area.


MY FAMILY: DJ Mbo and his children Letsiwe and Sakhile.



DIVING IN: One of the visitors diving into the water with his clothes on.



ENJOYING: People enjoying the cool water at the pool.



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PRAY FOR PEACE, PROSPERITY AND GROWTH - PM

STORIES BY NONDUDUZO KUNENE
Manzini

PRIME Minister Ambrose Dlamini has urged the Christian community to pray for peace, stability and growth of the country.

The premier was speaking during an all night prayer held at Mavuso Hall Number One in Manzini on Friday. During the Voice of the Church (VOC) prayer, Ministry of Home Affairs Under Secretary Arnold Dlamini, who was representing the minister, read the PM's message to the nation.

In the message, the prime minister stated that the country needs the presence of God in Eswatini more than ever before. He thanked VOC for arranging a national prayer at the beginning of every year. "The national prayer is very important for prosperity and growth of our country," he said.

The PM pleaded with Christians to pray for a divine orchestrated economic turnaround and the will of God in 2020 for the country.

The premier also asked the nation to pray for

the effective roll-out of the government pioneered strategic roadmap, peace and stability of the country.

"May God have favour over Cabinet and leadership of the country and may the Kingdom of Eswatini be favoured by the international community," he said. The Minister of Home Affairs Princess Lindiwe through her US, said as Emaswati are celebrating a crossover from 2019 to 2020, they should not forget how far God has brought the nation. This she said while quoting 1st Samuel seven verse 12.

"We have to invite Jesus to come and help us as the disciples did when you read in Luke 8:22-25 where Jesus assured the disciples not to be afraid, hence He commanded the sea to be still," she said. She added that God listens and answers prayers therefore the country should look unto Him and worship Him at all times because all nations shall bow to him. Further the minister said the Kingdom of Eswatini respects people's rights when it comes to worship, hence there is freedom of worship and freedom to all religions. She said this is done in observing Section 23 of the constitution. "As we pray we need to be spe-



HALLELUJAH: VOC National Director Reverend Zachariah Mthethwa addressing the congregation during the annual all night prayer service at Mavuso Trade Centre on Friday night. (Pics: Simon Shabangu)

cific, know what we want and what we are praying for," she added.

Meanwhile, Manzini Regional Secretary Samkeliso Dlamini, speaking on behalf of Chief Gija who is Manzini Regional Administrator, expressed gratitude to VOC for choosing Manzini as the centre for the national prayer.

Dlamini said national prayers were the perfect space for people to reflect and look at what they can change and where they can improve as the

year begins. He added that national prayers played a huge role in the stability of the country. "The nation is strengthened by prayers of Christians," he said. Dlamini said the main reason this country is peaceful is because of the prayers from Christians.

He said when looking at all those countries that no longer pray or hold such prayer events, they are constantly fighting with civil wars an everyday thing while Eswatini was free from it all.



AMEN: Bishop Elias Shongwe of Shongwe and Khuphuka ministering in song to the throngs of his fans.

Shongwe and Khuphuka excites fans

CHRISTIANS were well catered for during the all night service as music and prayer were the order of the day.

Reverend Elias Shongwe of Shongwe and Khuphuka Saved Group delivered a spectacular performance.

Shongwe music shook everyone who attended the prayer service. The first song he sang *Njengenduzela* brought people who were still outside the hall inside.

As he sang the second song *Siphila Mahhala*, the Mavuso Hall

seemed very small as they sang and danced along the group's marvellous dance moves.

Shongwe pleaded with the nation at large to support VOC monetary wise.

He further applauded the Christian radio station for instilling moral values to the nation.

The service was also attended by Christians from neighbouring countries. Religious leaders from the country and outside as well as those from all the Christian bodies of the country were also part of the service.



GIFT: Reverend Nathi Gumede presenting tokens of appreciation to the guests US Arnold Dlamini and RS Samkeliso Dlamini.



PRESENT: A section of the brethren who attended the service.



IN NUMBERS: They came from near and far from different denominations across the country to hear the Word of God.



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Matsapha behind Engine Garage

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Teen relates 6-year rape ordeal by her brother

BY BONGIWE DLAMINI
Manzini

...rapist brother sentenced to 15 years no fine under the SODV Act

A 15-year-old scholar attempted to end her life by drinking a chemical used to de-tick cattle after her family turned against her for reporting a rape incident involving her brother, who had allegedly raped her for years.

*Nothando of Nyakeni had taken her brother *Nsindiso (22) to task after he repeatedly raped her since 2013 when she was only 10 years old and doing Grade Three.

Nsindiso was arrested in December and charged with contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act No.15 of 2018. Although sharing the same surname, the two are born of the same mother but different fathers. The incident happened at the siblings' maternal homestead where they lived with their grandmother.

Narrating her ordeal in court, Nothando said her brother started raping her back in 2013 as they shared the same room. She said it all started when he touched her buttocks and when she protested, he ordered her to keep quiet or he would kill her.

Nsindiso proceeded to rape his minor sister. Nothando said she never reported the matter to anyone because she feared that he would kill her as he had threatened.

Later that year, the girl relocated to Mdumezulu to live with her father for some time before returning to Nyakeni in 2016. There, Nothando said the sleeping arrangement was still the same so she continued sharing the same bedroom with Nsindiso.

One night while she was asleep, the now teenage girl said her brother touched her buttocks and breasts before sexually violating her in the same fashion as before. The abuse continued for the duration of the year 2017 and further until December 2019.

According to Nothando, in June, she decided that she would report her brother, amid the death threats. Indeed, she informed her class teacher about her ordeal who proceeded to notify the school principal about it.

The reason that Nothando did not report to her grandmother about it was that the elderly woman took the side of her grandson in the matter. In one instance, Nothando said after the teachers had taken up the matter with the police, the latter went to her home and enquired about the abuse, though the accused person was not home at the time.

"My grandmother said I had betrayed the whole family by reporting the matter to my teachers and the police. She said this in the presence of Nsindiso who in turn took advantage of the support from granny by continuing to abuse me almost every day," she said.

After getting wind that the police were looking for him, Nsindiso disappeared from his home for a few months until October. While he was gone, the teenage girl said her grandmother accused her of being responsible for his disappearance, and she threatened to chase her from home if she ever reported anything more to the police.

The last time that Nsindiso raped his sister was on December 6, 2019.

On this day, Nothando said while she was dressing up after being raped by her brother, two of her siblings walked in on her and asked what had happened. This was then that she informed two of her siblings about what had been happening to her for years.

Flabbergasted, the two siblings attacked Nsindiso. Meanwhile, Nothando said this prompted her to find the easy way out by taking her own life.

"Realising that granny would learn of the fact that I had told my siblings about

the matter, who would possibly take it up with the police, I decided to go to the nearby bush where I had planned to drink a chemical used to de-tick cattle," Nothando said.

Fortunately for her, one of her siblings followed her into the bush and advised her against killing herself. The two brothers accompanied Nothando to the police station with the intention to report Nsindiso but to their surprise, the latter had already surrendered himself.

When given the opportunity to state his defence, Nsindiso opted to say nothing. When mitigating, however, he appealed for a lenient sentence citing that he had a seven-month-old baby who depended on him for support.

He hoped to start studying at UNESWA as he wanted to continue with his studies in order for him to take care of his family since his father was late.

Manzini Principal Magistrate David Khumalo, who presided over the matter, sentenced him to 15 years imprisonment without an option of a fine.

**Not real names to protect survivor of abuse.*

My grandmother said I had betrayed the whole family by reporting the matter to my teachers and the police. She said this in the presence of Nsindiso who in turn took advantage of the support from granny by continuing to abuse me almost every day



GEARING UP: A man crosses the city's streets carrying a pile of blankets in readiness for the winter season which will be soon approaching. (Pic: Mduduzi Mngomezulu)

FATHER IMPREGNATES DAUGHTER, DIES

BY SIZWE DLAMINI
Nkamazi

A 23-year-old woman has shocked Nkamazi community after confessing that her deceased father sired her four-year-old son.

The woman is alleged to have been sexually abused by her late father for 10 years before eventually impregnating her in 2015 when she was only 17 years old. Her father passed away in 2017.

For ethical reasons, the name of the woman has been deliberately withheld to protect her.

In an interview, she said she had concealed her abuse because of fear.

"I am the eldest of three siblings. I have a brother (17) and a sister (14) and both are under my care along with my son (four).

In 2013, our hardworking mother passed away, leaving our family in the care of our father who was an alcoholic," she said.

She stated that during the day her father would work at a forestry company and return home late and tired. She would return home from school and cook for the whole family.

She said her father would abuse

alcohol so much that he would return home and order her to sleep in his bed. Initially she saw nothing wrong with it but he eventually had sexual intercourse with her on numerous occasions.

The survivor added that as years lapsed, her father would rape her and tell her to keep this a secret since he would be jailed for such, leaving them with no one to feed and look after.

"Over the years he would rape me and I would suffer in silence.

This affected my school work as I started to fail and my siblings told a relative about the rape which I initially denied when my aunt asked me about it in 2014.

Fortunately my father fell ill in 2015 after impregnating me and he passed away in 2017, leaving me with a son. I am struggling even to show my son his father's picture as he might be confused," she added.

Nkamazi Headman Musa Ndwandwe said so many rape cases go unreported to the police in the country. He said the woman told him her story, adding that it touched him so much that he openly wept.

He appealed to all survivors to report such cases to the police immediately they happen.

FESBC DEMANDS PROTECTION FOR SMEs

BY SIFISO DLAMINI
Mbabane

GOVERNMENT has been urged to provide a level ground for competition between small edium enterprises (SMs) and big corporate companies.

This is the view of the Federation of Eswatini Business Community Hhohho region Chairman Johannes Manikela, who felt the Matsapha Town Council's decision to eject the informal chicken market was unfair if they were soon to allow a big corporate to take over the same business.

He said this after noticing developments at Mathangeni in Matsapha where last year, a booming broiler sale business was shut down and a number of informal entrepreneurs who were selling and slaughtering



chickens were evicted as the area was deemed unsanitary and a health hazard.

He said what could be deemed as a clash of economies being the for-

mal and informal economies, has seen one of the country's major companies establish a similar business close to where the informal businesses were.

Manikela said he noticed that a large corporate company was setting up shop in close proximity to the area where the vendors were removed with the promise of providing them land to establish a sanitary working area.

"Thousands of Emaswati were benefitting from the business as the people working there were able to support their families," he said.

Acknowledged

This was a course for concern as it appeared that the SMEs were being stifled in favour of big companies.

As FESBC, their main aim was to assist members of the business community and with SMEs; they were particularly not receiving the necessary support from government.

He acknowledged that the conditions in the area were not sanitary and were a health hazard but insisted that instead of closing down the

businesses, government and the local authority should have assisted the SMEs in improving the conditions to allow the businesses to carry on.

"As FESBC, we feel government is not doing enough to support SMEs and should not allow big companies to bulldoze SMEs but set a level ground for both types of businesses to thrive," he added.

He said this was important for the development of the country as a whole where all businesses had a chance and the support they needed to succeed.

As FESBIC, what they encouraged was to set the stage for young people to venture into business looking at the current unemployment rate in the country and such instances were discouraging and encouraged government to intervene and assist SMEs.

The Municipal Council of Matsapha said as a local authority, they could not comment on the matter since the area in question fell outside the urban boundaries.

BY SIFISO DLAMINI
Mbabane

LOCALS HIRE SEVEN BUSES TO BUSHIRI CROSSOVER

THOUSANDS of Eswatini members of the Enlightened Christian Gathering Church (ECG) convened at the FNB Stadium to attend the New Year's Crossover to show support to Prophet Shepherd Bushiri.

Bushiri, also known as Major One, is a Christian preacher, motivational speaker, author and businessman from Malawi.

He leads a Christian non-denominational evangelical church known as the Enlightened Christian Gathering.

Following the turbulent year the prophet and church and leader went through which included a fraud case against the prophet and his wife, members of the church were not

deterred as they turned out in their numbers for the crossover service which is now in its fourth year.

In the early afternoon, worshippers started flocking to the stadium.

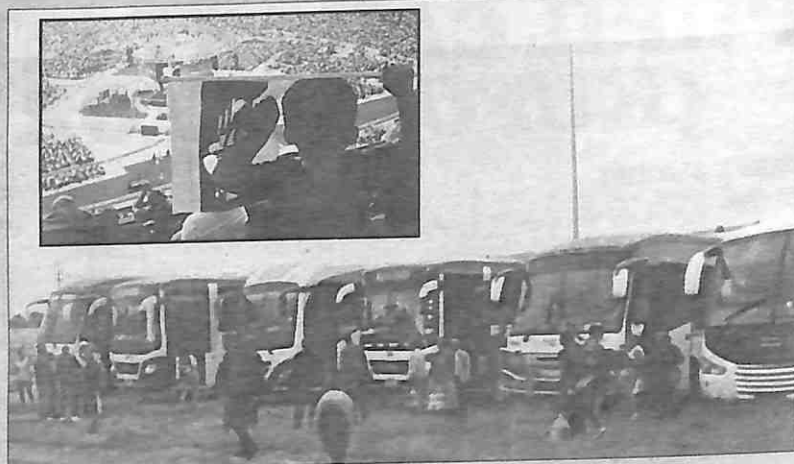
People from at least 30 countries attended. Not to be left out, Eswatini ECG branch hired over seven buses to attend the crossover where they joined members from different countries.

Eswatini branch leader Pastor Eric Kusani said they had to attend the service to show support and thank God for being with them and their leader throughout the turbulent year.

He said the service was a moment of fellowshiping in one accord and encouraging each other as well as acknowledging the grace of God.

"Looking at what we went through as a church, it was encouraging to gather together with other members to share the Word of God and encourage one another moving forward," he said. He was surprised with the turn up on the backdrop of what they went through as a church last year. He said the turn up was encouraging and thanked God for supporting them.

He added that the service went well where members of the church's praise team sang and worshipped the Lord and pastors, including the prophet, shared the Word of God. Next year, they would also attend the service as a local branch as they were in full support of the prophet and his wife as ECG Eswatini branch.



EN ROUTE: Members of the Eswatini branch of the Enlightened Christian Gathering boarding the buses on their way to the 2019-2020 crossover service held at the FNB Stadium in Johannesburg. (Courtesy pics)

GIRL (8) RAPED, KILLED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

BY WONDERBOY DLAMINI
Siteki

A family from Sitsatsaweni was ushered into the New Year in a rather sad note as their youngest family member was allegedly raped and killed before being dumped a few kilometres from the homestead.

The eight-year-old girl's body was discovered with several stab wounds on the chest and stomach after having disappeared on New Year's Day. The shocking discovery was made by a resident who stumbled upon the lifeless body which had been dumped at an abandoned old shop, a stone's throw from Sitsatsaweni Primary.

Last Friday, members of the Mnisi family were found mourning the death of the child. The child's mother, Ntombikayise



Ndzabandzaba said "Ayanda together with her cousins went to a local sports ground to watch ball games. This was just after the family had lunch on New Year's day. Ndzabandzaba said Ayanda did not return home until it was late in the evening. "We assumed she might have visited her grand-

mother's place which is situated close to the sports ground," she said. The following day, Ndzabandzaba received a call from community police who asked her to rush to the shops and upon her arrival, a handful of residents and state police were gathered near the body of a child. She positively

identified the lifeless body as that of her daughter. She said one of the deceased's friends stated that they left the sports ground at around 5pm and headed home. Along the way, the deceased's friend took a different path as she (deceased) took her own way home.

That was the last time she was seen, until the following day when the shocking discovery was made. Ndzabandzaba said the body of the child had marks which indicated that she was raped before being killed.

"We suspect that the child was raped before being killed as her private parts had injuries," said the deceased's mother.

Meanwhile, police confirmed the incident. Deputy Police Information and Communications Officer Inspector Nosipho Mnguni said they were still investigating the matter.

Woman collapses on way to church, paramedics called

BY DELISA THWALA
Mbabane

A woman's plan to attend her first service in the New Year with her family was cut short after she collapsed on her way to church yesterday morning.

The woman, who was later identified as Thobeka Dlamini, is reported to have been fine when she left her house until she reached the uphill leading to Mvutjini waiting room.

Initially, she is from Gelekezeni in Ezulwini. After a sudden loss of power and proper functioning of her limbs, the family members called for emergency help and the paramedics arrived quickly and promptly attended to her.

Dlamini was reportedly highly dehydrated after she walked a long distance as the heat took its toll on the lady.

"It is a very hot this season and the heat is unbearable. This lady walked a very long distance without taking enough water hence her body failed, but since we got here in time we managed to boost her up and we are hopeful she will be resuscitated," said paramedic Phindile Zwane.

The woman could not be interviewed as she was still a bit out of breath but her family members said she was okay when she left home.

"She is not a sickly person, when we left home she was perfectly fine hence our shock when she suddenly dropped on the pavement we did not know what to do. I guess we are no longer going to church," said Phumla Dlamini.

PM mourns floods deaths in Indonesia

STORIES BY NOKUZOLA THWALA
Mbabane

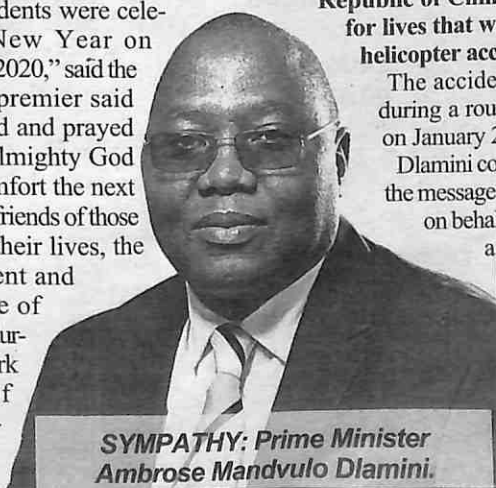
PRIME Minister Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini has sent condolences to the Republic of Indonesia following the death of a number of people in recent floods.

The overflow torrents resulted in loss of lives in that country.

Dlamini communicated this message of sympathy to the President Joko Widodo, the government and the people of Indonesia through its embassy which is based in Pretoria.

"I have it in my command by His Majesty, King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Queen Mother, the government and the people of Eswatini,

as well as my own to express our grief in learning about the tragic loss of lives as a result of the severe flooding that hit Indonesia's capital as residents were celebrating New Year on January 1, 2020," said the PM. The premier said they hoped and prayed that the Almighty God would comfort the next of kin and friends of those who lost their lives, the government and the people of Indonesia during this dark hour of bereavement.



SYMPATHY: Prime Minister Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini.

Sympathises with Taiwan for helicopter accident

ON the other hand, the PM conveyed words of sympathy to the Republic of China (Taiwan) for lives that were lost in a helicopter accident.

The accident occurred during a routine mission on January 2.

Dlamini communicated the message of sympathy on behalf of the King and Queen

Mother to the President Tsai Ing-wen, the government and the people

of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

"I have it in my command by His Majesty, King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Queen Mother, the government and the people of Eswatini, as well as my own to express our grief in learning about the tragic loss of lives as a result of a helicopter accident during a routine mission to visit soldiers in Yilan, northern Taiwan on Thursday January 2, 2020," said the PM.

Comfort

The premier said they hoped and prayed that the Almighty God would comfort the next of kin and friends of those who lost their lives, the government and the people of China (Taiwan) during this dark hour of bereavement.

It is a very hot this season and the heat is unbearable. This lady walked a very long distance without taking enough water hence her body failed, but since we got here in time we managed to boost her up and we are hopeful she will be resuscitated

FORM 4 MHLATANE HIGH PUPIL CAUGHT STEAMING (KUFUTSA) FOR EXAM

BY SIZWE DLAMINI
Pigg's Peak

THREE Mhlatane High pupils got the shock of their lives when they discovered their repeating Form Four classmate (19) steaming for exams using herbs from a traditional healer.

The bizarre incident occurred in a three-room all boys external boarding facility near Mhlatane High in early December.

The incident only came to light recently when one of the shocked boys reported it to his parents.

Due to the fact that the incident involves minors, their names have been withheld for ethical reasons.

One of the boys said their classmate was a repeating pupil from Manzini.

"Initially I thought he had gone to the external hostel earlier because he wanted to entertain a female.

I decided to go to the hostel and witness the couple together with my roommate and sneaked to the bedroom only find him speaking to his ancestors while covered under a boiling pot, asking for good luck during the exams," said one of the pupils.

The pupil alleged that he found his

classmate covered under a brown blanket placed over an electric stove.

About five minutes later, their steaming classmate discovered he was being spied on and allegedly threatened to kill his classmates if they ever spoke about the incident to anyone.

Incident

"It was only last week that I told my father about the incident because I want to move out of the hostel," said one of the pupils. When reached for comment, Mhlatane High Principal Dr Mandla Dlamini said he was treating the incident as a rumour because it did not happen within the school



SCENE OF INCIDENT: Mhlatane High School where a pupil was allegedly caught steaming outside the school premises.

premises.

"We heard about the incident but since it did not happen within school premises, I believe the hostel master can comment further," he said.

The principal, however, stated that the school does not condone such behaviour.

The hotel master when contacted said he could not expel the alleged

steaming pupil because there was no criminal element.

"It would be wrong for me to expel the pupil because he has committed no crime, also the story might be a rumour as children are creative creatures. I have spoken to the implicated pupil and he denied the incident but I will investigate the matter further," he said.

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HARD WORK PAYS OFF FOR SEVEN PRIMARY PUPILS

BY MBONO MDLULI and
NOKUZOLA THWALA
Mbabane

HARD work is what made this group of seven primary school pupils to pass their examinations.

On Friday, the ministry of education and training released the Standard Five results, which proved to be the best in the last decade. The seven pupils were part of these results. They also thanked God for helping them as they understood that they succeeded because of His grace.

Mnqobi Rufus Khathwane (13) obtained a First Class pass with Merit. He attended school at KaMkhweli Primary. Rufus wants to pursue studies in engineering because he just fell in love with the profession. He said he did study, but in most cases, he would grab the concepts in class while his teachers were teaching.

Sihlelelwe Nkambule got a First Class pass. She attended Sifundzani Primary in Mbabane.

Sihlelelwe said she had to put away her cellphone in order to pass because she realised that her gadget could be a disturbance in her studies. She said she wanted to become a medical doctor after completing her high school education.

Gcinile Philisiwe Ndlovu also got a First Class pass. She attended Ensingweni Nazarene Primary School in the Hhohho region. Gcinile said studying hard worked well for her. She would also listen to her teachers because she looked up to them for her success.

She also wants to be a medical doctor upon finishing her studies.

Manelisi Mamba also got a First Class pass. She was at Mizpar Private School in Manzini. Unfortunately, this publication could not get through to her, as the contacts given would ring with no one picking up on the other end.

Another pupil who succeeded was Siyabonga Mdluli, who attended Kwaluseni Infant Primary School.

He got a Second Class pass. However, this publication could not get hold of

WHAT DTG PROBLEMS - HEALTH MINISTER

STORIES BY NOKUZOLA THWALA
Mbabane

HEALTH Minister Lizzy Nkosi is not aware of complaints on the so-called dangers of DTG on women of child bearing age.

Dolutegravir (DTG) is the latest recommended drug for HIV treatment; the

World Health Organisation endorsed it since 2016.

Nkosi said as a result, she saw the need for educational programmes to address the concerns specifically so that women were comfortable with it.

"The programmes will further inform on the benefits of using this one over the previous drug. There is no way that the government of Eswatini would bring reg-

imen change on something that would cause more problems on patients. This perception is wrong; we know that at this point people will not give birth to deformed children just because they take DTG," she added.

The minister noted that transition was not smooth in any given situation. She said there was bound to be an uproar or dissatisfaction when change is brought as

the new drug might have slight or different side effects. "Imagine if you have been using a certain drug for 20 years and you are told to change to

another one. The side effects might be there, but the first resistance is from individuals since change is not easily accepted," stated the minister.

...MINIMAL SIDE EFFECTS

WHO HIV Officer Dr. Nomthandazo Lukhele emphasised that the drug had minimal side effects.

She said like all medicines, dolutegravir could cause side effects but not everyone was affected. DGT associated side effects were fewer, usually mild, well tolerated and could be managed by health professionals. "Research has shown that taking dolutegravir at the time of becoming pregnant or during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy may increase the risk of a type of birth defect called neural tube defect, such as *spina bifida* (malformed spinal cord). Therefore, women of child bearing age planning to have a baby should consult a doctor or nurse about the risks and benefits of taking dolutegravir. The doctor or nurse will review treatment and offer other antiretroviral regimens as per need," she said. Lukhele stated that WHO encour-

aged women of childbearing age to use family planning methods while on DGT containing regimen. She said if one fell pregnant while taking dolutegravir, they should not discontinue the drug without consulting the doctor or nurse, as this may cause the HIV to multiply and increase rapidly. This could also increase the chances of the mother being sick and also of the baby being born with HIV.

Organisation

Lukhele said her organisation and UNAIDS approved DTG.

She said Eswatini was among many countries, including Uganda, Kenya, Botswana, United States of America, Brazil and many European countries using DTG. Lukhele added that dolutegravir was often prescribed as a fixed dose combination with two other antiretrovirals (lamivudine and tenofovir)

which is taken as a single pill once a day. The fixed-dose combination was preferred as it significantly reduces the number of pills taken.

She said DGT could be used by both adults and children above the age of six weighing above 15kg. It is to be taken with or without food once a day. "Research has shown that DGT is highly effective. It reduces the prevalence rate of HIV in the body and keeps it at low levels at a comparatively faster rate than other available antiretroviral for long periods of time, with good adherence. Reducing the amount of virus helps to increase the white blood cells (CD4 cells) that are important for fighting infection and lowers the risk of HIV transmission. In addition, dolutegravir is also able to stop the multiplication of HIV that is resistant to commonly used antiretroviral like nevirapine and efavirenz which have been noted to be on the rise," she said.



FIRST CLASS:
Manelisi Mamba from Mizpar Private School.



MERIT: Mnqobi Rufus Khathwane from KaMkhweli Primary School.



FIRST CLASS:
Sihlelelwe Nkambule from Sifundzani Primary School.



SECOND CLASS:
Sisekelo Mkhasibe from Edwaleni Primary School.



SECOND CLASS:
Temlandvo Thobile Madvolu from Mliba Nazarene Primary School.



SECOND CLASS:
Siyabonga Mdluli from Kwaluseni Infant Primary School.



MERIT: Tsandvwa Maphanga from Matsapha Government Primary School.

Siyabonga. His father, Samkelo Michael Mdluli said he was grateful to God that his son passed.

However, Mdluli said he had not wished for his son to attain the Second Class pass because he was capable of achieving more than that. Sisekelo Mkhasibe (12) also

obtained a Second Class pass from Edwaleni Primary. Temlandvo Thobile Madvolu was another pupil that scored a Second Class pass. She attended school at Mliba Nazarene Primary. Tsandvwa Maphanga (12) from Matsapha Government Primary School passed with a Merit.

JANUARY 2020 INTAKE

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LIHOVISI LEMHLALA PHANSI LATISA SIVE NEMAKHASIMENDE ALO KUSUKELA MHLAKA 07 BHIMBIDVWANE 2020 LIGATJA LALO LAKAMANZINI LIYASUSWA LIYA ESAKHIWENI SASE-ESTEL HOUSE PREMISES NO: 4.

YEAR STARTS WITH 107 ARRESTED FOR DD

BY NONDUDUZO KUNENE
Mbabane

THE first weekend of 2020 saw a total of 107 motorists arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol.

The previous weekend, after Christmas, saw one of the highest figures of 2019, as there were 145 drivers nabbed for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Comparing the two figures indicates that the numbers have increased as compared to the first weekend of 2019. The first weekend of 2019 recorded 72 motorists

arrested for contravening Section 91 as read with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Act of 2007.

Nabbed

However, comparing the last weekend of the previous years saw a decline in the number of drink-driving cases. The last weekend of 2018 had 163 motorists nabbed for DD while in 2019 they were 145, which was a slight decline.

Deputy Chief Police Information and Communications Officer Inspector Nosipho Mnguni confirmed the figures yesterday. "There were 107 drink-driving cases reported over the past weekend," she

said.

All 107 suspects have either appeared in court for their troubles or will be greeting the various magistrates this morning. Mnguni pleaded with the nation to always stay away from driving while intoxicated.

She said whenever one needs to drive home when drunk, getting hold of a friend was the best option.

Mnguni then advised motorists to be drug free at all times, as members of the Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) were all out to arrest all offenders of drink-driving.

Be lenient, I need to pay school fees - DD offender

STORIES BY VUYILE DLAMINI
Magistrate's Court

AS the country enters the back to school frenzy, one motorist's woes have already reached their peak after he was arrested and charged with driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Mlungisi Ncabakelwane pleaded with the court to mete out a lenient sentence, stating that he had two high school-going children who he needed to pay school fees for.

"Your Worship, I am already stressed about having to pay school fees for my two children next week. I know that what I did was wrong; however I just need the court to consider the fact that I am financially overwhelmed at this time. I promise that I will never commit this offence again," Ncabakelwane pleaded. The accused was allegedly nabbed while driving while under the influence of alcohol at Mbangweni in the early hours of

yesterday morning.

When a breathalyser test was administered on him, he was found to have a blood alcohol content reading of 0.60 mg/l. He was then arrested after he exceeded the blood alcohol limit of 0.38 mg/l. After hearing his mitigation, the court sentenced Mlungisi to serve 12 months in prison, with the option to pay a fine of E1 200.

In another matter, a South African woman stated that she would learn to respect the laws of the country, after she was arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol at Mbangweni.

Thandeka Kaze was arrested and charged with drink-driving after she

was reportedly found driving her BMW sedan while under the influence of alcohol. When a breathalyser test was administered on her, she recorded a blood alcohol content reading of 0.63 mg/l. In her mitigation, Kaze apologised for having disrespected the country's laws. "I know that I am a visitor and I promise that the next time I visit the country, I will be more respectful to the laws. I apologise sincerely and I hope that the court can be lenient in this regard," Kaze pleaded.

After hearing her mitigation, Kaze was sentenced to eight months in prison, with the option to pay a fine of E1 000.

Here is a list of some of the DD offenders:

Name	Alcohol Content	Sentence
1. Thandeka Kaze	0.63 mg/l	E1 000/ 8 months
2. Thandolwethu Dlamini	0.40 mg/l	E800/ 6 months
3. Bongani Mkhathshwa	0.42 mg/l	E800/ 6 months

Man refuses breathalyser test ...claims he knew he was above limit

IN a comical turn of events, one motorist nabbed for driving while under the influence of alcohol refused to take the breathalyser test knowing fully well he was above the limit.

Sipho* caused laughter in the courtroom, as Senior Magistrate Nonhlanhla Dlamini attempted to decipher the reasons why he refused to take the breathalyser test.

"Your Worship, I did not even bother undergoing the breathalyser test because I knew very well that I would exceed the limit. I thought that if I did not provide my breath specimen, I would have a leg to stand on when I get to court," Sipho stated, causing laughter in the court gallery.

When police officers ordered him to take a breathalyser test, he refused to do so.

Sipho was then charged with not only driving while under the influence of alcohol, but also with refusing to take the breathalyser test.

Senior Magistrate Dlamini questioned Sipho on why he would

cause more trouble for himself, stating that if he had just given the police what they wanted; he would only be facing one charge.

"You are now at a disadvantage because if you had taken the test you would have been able to mitigate for a lenient sentence."

Now you are facing more charges because you refused to abide by the law.

What if your blood alcohol content was only, for example, 0.24 mg/l? You would not even be standing here today, as the law stated that you can only be charged with drink-driving if you have exceeded the limit of 0.38 mg/l," the stunned judicial officer stated.

Upon hearing his explanation, the court sentenced Sipho to serve eight months in prison, with the option to pay a fine of E1 500 for driving while under the influence of alcohol. For the second charge, Sipho was cautioned and discharged, with the judicial officer stating that the next time he was nabbed, he should abide by the police officer's orders.

Arrested after taking over from sober driver

ANOTHER motorist who pleaded with the court to be lenient in his sentencing due to him having to pay for his children's school fees was Lucas Kunene.

Kunene stated that he was only trying to assist his brother, who complained about being tired of driving. "My brother informed me that his feet had started to hurt, as we had been driving for a long period of time. That was when I offered to take the wheel. Unfortunately, that was when I was nabbed by police officers for driving while under the influence of alcohol," he stated.

When a breathalyser test was con-

ducted on him, he was found to have a blood alcohol content reading of 0.60 mg/l. Kunene was slapped with an additional charge, driving an unroadworthy vehicle, as it bore a defective head lamp.

"I beg you to please consider the circumstances that led to my arrest. I promise that I will never commit a similar offence in the future as I am well aware of what is at stake," Kunene pleaded.

Upon hearing his mitigation, Senior Magistrate Nonhlanhla Dlamini sentenced him to serve 12 months in prison, with the option to pay a fine of E1 200.

Man arrested for sodomising boy on Christmas Day

BY BONCIWE DLAMINI
Manzini

A 10-year-old boy was scarred for life after he was sodomised by a 24-year-old man of Bhhekinkhosi on Christmas Day.

Thulani Mbingo appeared before Manzini Principal Magistrate David Khumalo on Tuesday on a charge of contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act No. 15 of 2018.

When leading evidence in court, the minor *Peter told the court that he was in the grazing land with younger brother as he was sent by his mother to herd the family cattle during the day.

While there, the Grade Four pupil informed the court that Mbingo emerged from a distance and he called him. Since he was acquainted with Mbingo, the boy responded to the call by going towards Mbingo.

However, when he got there, Peter said his assailant dragged him into a nearby bush where he first gave him



a E20 note.

Thereafter, the accused person removed the minor's pair of trousers before undressing himself. Mbingo allegedly pushed Peter onto the ground before sodomising the boy. "I felt sharp pain and I noticed that there was blood coming from my behind," the boy said.

Informed

After the incident, Peter said he rushed home where he informed his mother about the unfortunate encounter with Mbingo.

Likewise, when leading evidence in court, the child's mother said Mbingo was well-known to her and her son as he was employed as a groundsman at a neighbouring homestead at

Bhekinkhosi. The distraught mother also mentioned that the accused person was also a regular customer as he usually went to Peter's home to buy alcohol.

She confirmed that her son had returned home on the day to report to her that Mbingo had sexually violated him. Evidently, the mother said when she inspected her child she noticed that he was bleeding from the backside.

Subsequently, the police were called and they took Peter to hospital for medical assistance.

The matter is still pending before Principal Magistrate David Khumalo.

**Not real name to protect survivor of abuse*

Woman (30) nabbed smuggling dagga at Mhlumeni Border

BY WONDERBOY DLAMINI
Siteki

A woman has been arrested for trying to smuggle 4kg of dagga stashed in a school bag to the Republic of Mozambique at Mhlumeni Border Gate.

Colisile Ndzinisa (30) charged with contravening the Pharmacy Act in that she wrongfully and unlawfully possessed the consignment without being a holder of a valid permit.

The accused person was crossing over to Mozambique when the police manning the border gate searched her bag.

Appearing before Principal Magistrate Dumisani Magagula, the accused person was informed of her right to legal representation, and she elected to conduct her own defence. The crown filed an application to have her remanded in custody pending setting of



a date of trial.

She was, however, granted bail fixed at E2000 and the matter is expected back in court this week for setting of a trial date.

Meanwhile, appearing before the same court was Sandziso Maziya facing a charge of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm.

He is alleged to have wrongfully and unlawfully assaulted Mlungisi Dlamini by stabbing him with a sharp object on the upper torso and when asked how he intended to plead to the charge, he indicated that he will plead guilty. He was admitted to bail fixed at E2 000 after the crown indicated that it will lead evidence to prove commission of the crime.



FOCUS on DD cases



Senior magistrate asks DD offender if he's paid school fees

STORIES BY BONGIWE DLAMINI
Manzini

"WHY don't you use your money to pay school fees instead of imbibing and breaking the law?"

This was a question posed by Manzini Senior Magistrate Sindisiwe Zwane to a road traffic offender Phumlani Bongumusa Zikalala (33) of Logoba who was arrested and charged with driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Zikalala was arrested on Saturday evening while driving a Fuso truck with



registration number JSD 207 CH along the MR4 public road.

His breath specimen reading was 0.41mg/l, exceeding the legal limit of 0.38mg/l.

Another charge levelled against the 33-year-old was for negligently driving the aforementioned vehicle by changing lanes without due care, which resulted to it bumping into another vehicle, a silver grey Opel Astra driven by Thabiso Gama of Ngwempisana.

In mitigation, Zikalala told the court that he had children and a wife who depended on him for survival. He said his eldest child was nine years old.

Magistrate Zwane then asked

whether he was not supposed to be paying school fees for his child, and he responded to the affirmative. "Everyone is broke because this is the time of paying school fees but here you are drinking and breaking the law. It means you have a lot of money," the magistrate said. In response, Zikalala said this was not the case and he pleaded with the court for a lenient sentence. He was sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment with an option of E2 800 fine. "I hope this sentence will deter you from committing such an offence ever again," Magistrate Zwane concluded.

Sober driver disappears, car owner arrested

A man who was betrayed by his sober driver landed in the accused's dock after he drove a motor vehicle while intoxicated.

Mthunzi Gamedze (36) of Ticanfwinini was arrested yesterday morning along Ngwane Street while driving a Chevrolet sedan with registration number ASD 448 CM.

His breath specimen reading was 1.38mg/l, exceeding the legal limit of 0.38mg/l. This reading was the

second highest for the day, following 1.47mg/l recorded by the only female road traffic offender, Caroline Kunene.

In his defence, Gamedze told the court that he had a designated driver to chauffeur him around while he imbibed. However, the driver disappeared on him so he decided to drive himself home.

He was sentenced to two years imprisonment with an option of E2 000 fine.

On another note, Bongani Simelane (32) of Eteteni was arrested on Saturday near KaGcina, along 1st Street in Matsapha. He was driving a VW sedan with registration number CSD 411 AL, and his breath specimen reading was 0.96mg/l, exceeding the legal limit of 0.38mg/l.

Also, Simelane faced additional charges of driving the vehicle while it was unlicensed, and also stopping in the middle of the road.

He pleaded guilty to the first two counts, and not guilty to the third one. Therefore, he was acquitted on the third count of halting the vehicle in the middle of the road as he claimed that the car was parked on the side of the road.

When explaining how he was arrested, Simelane told the court that he was not driving the vehicle but was in fact trying to open the door for his sober driver.

He was forced to jump to the dri-



ver's seat to open the faulty door because the driver could not open it from the outside.

He was sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment with an option of E2 800 fine.

ESWATINI



GOVERNMENT

Government of Eswatini - Ministry of Public Works and Transport - Road Transportation Department
Road Transportation service Permit in terms of the Road Transportation Act of 2007

ADVERTISEMENT FOR RENEWALS AND AMENDMENTS PERMITS

Objections may be lodged against the application made below in writing to: The Board Secretary, Road Transportation Board, P. O. Box 3642, Mbabane within 14 days from the date of advert

Reference No	Full Name	Postal Address	Business Name	From To	Base Point	Service Type	Request Type
913	Velson v. Dlamini	P.O.Box 107 Mankayane	Khanyisani Transport	Amendment to delete routes, Dzeleni, Sigcineni, Tri cash, and to extend routes from Nciniseleni, Bhahwini, Sibovu, and Mankayane	Mankayane	Non scheduled	Amendment
766	BOY L DLAMINI	P.O.BOX 794 MANZINI	VUSUMUZI TRANSPORT	Amendment to change ownership from executor, from Boy Dlamini to Jabulani Dlamini	Phowe	Scheduled	Amendment
5785	BONGANIT. SIHLONGONYANE	P.O. BOX 3507 MBABANE	QIUTE STORM TRANSPORT	SIDVOKODVO, TRI CASH, MHLALENI, MAHALA, MAHLANYA, LUYENGO	SIDVOKODVO	Non scheduled	RENEWAL
365	AMBROSE DLAMINI	P.O.BOX 1661 MANZINI	TEMALANGENI TRANSPORT	AMMENDMENT TO INCREASE CARRYING CAPACITY FROM 15 SEATER TO 30 SEATER MIDI BUS NO STANDING AND TO ADD ONE MOTOR VEHICLE	LUYENGO	Non scheduled	Amendment
3583	PHILEMON Z. SHONGWE	P.O.BOX 558 EZULWINI	BHAMBOLUNYE TRANSPORT	ADDING 01 MOTOR VEHICLE	MVUTJINI	Non scheduled	Amendment
7344	BONGANI S. MOTSA	P.O.BOX 7729 MBABANE	TEMAVULANE TRANSPORT	ADDING HHUKWINI, LUHHEHENI	MASAKHANE	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
4246	WINSTON HOLLOWAY	P.O.BOX 1523 MBABANE	STONES TRANSPORT	AMMENDMENT TO ADD ROUTES SITIBENI TO MABHELENI	MBABANE	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
3504	MASOTSHA J MABUZA	P.O.BOX 1402 MBABANE	JAMASO TRANSPORT	TO ADD FLEET BY 1 MOTOR VEHICLE	MSUNDUZA	SCHOOL BUS	AMMENDMENT
5098	BONGANE SIHLONGONYANE	P.O.BOX 3507 MBABANE	QIUTE STORM TRANSPORT	AMMENDMENT TO INCREASE CAPACITY FROM 15 SEATER TO 30 SEATER	MANZINI	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
2405	KENNETH S. DLUDLU	P.O.BOX 9 MHLOSHENI	SIKA MAREZA TRANSPORT	AMMENDMENT TO ADD ROUTES HLATHIKHULU, MHLALENI, INTERBOARD	NHLANGANO	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
5339	MANOZI HADEBE	P.O BOX 537 NHLANGANO	MTHIMKHULU TRANS	AMMENDMENT TO CHAND PERMIT HOLDER FROM MANOZI TO LINDIWE KHUMALO	MAHLALINI	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
6322	MANOZI HADEBE	P.O BOX 537 NHLANGANO	MTHIMKHULU TRANS	AMMENDMENT TO CHAND PERMIT HOLDER FROM MANOZI TO LINDIWE KHUMALO	NHLANGANO	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
3703	MANOZI HADEBE	P.O BOX 537 NHLANGANO	MTHIMKHULU TRANS	AMMENDMENT TO CHAND PERMIT HOLDER FROM MANOZI TO LINDIWE KHUMALO	NHLANGANO	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
6321	MANOZI HADEBE	P.O BOX 537 NHLANGANO	MTHIMKHULU TRANS	AMMENDMENT TO CHAND PERMIT HOLDER FROM MANOZI TO LINDIWE KHUMALO	MASHEKESHENI	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
4323	MANOZI HADEBE	P.O BOX 537 NHLANGANO	MTHIMKHULU TRANS	AMMENDMENT TO CHAND PERMIT HOLDER FROM MANOZI TO LINDIWE KHUMALO	MBANGWENI	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
913	VELSON V.DLAMINI	P.O.BOX 107 MANKAYANE	KHANYISANI TRANSPORT	DELETING NDZELENI, SIGCINENI, TRI CASH AND EXTEND ROUTE FROM NCINISELENI, BHAHWINI, SIBOVU, MANKAYANE	MANKAYANE	NON SCHEDULED	AMMENDMENT
2963	MAYVILLE TOURS	P.O. BOX 729 NHLANGANO	MAYVILLE TOURS	AMMENDMENT TO CHANGE PERMIT HOLDER TO SOONYBOY ZWANE AND BUSINESS STYLE TO MANGIPHILILE TOURS	MASHOBENI	Non scheduled	AMMENDMENT
2207	MICHAEL MASILELA	P.O.BOX 1511 MBABANE	CLASSIC TRANSPORT	TO CHANGE BUSINESS STYLE AND PERMIT HOLDER FROM PHUMZAKHELE (PTY) LTD TO CLASSIC TRANSPORT	PIGGS PEAK	SCHEDULED	AMMENDMENT
694	ELMON M DLAMINI	P.O.BOX 1272 MATSAPHA	MJAMBA TRANSPORT	AMMENDMENT TO DELETE MZAMO, UNISWA AND INDUSTRIAL SITE	MANZINI	Non scheduled	4

SECRETARY TO THE BOARD
ROAD TRANSPORTATION BOARD



visit: www.sppra.co.sz

The Eswatini Public Procurement Regulatory Agency (ESPPRA) hereby invites suitably qualified and registered suppliers, eligible to participate in public procurement to submit tenders to the above listed and registered departments, local Governments and state owned enterprises. Visit www.sppra.co.sz to view or download latest tenders.

King disperses Emabutfo



MBUBE: His Majesty King Mswati III leading the regiment in song and dance before dispersing them at Ngabezweni Royal Residence on Saturday. Pics: Simon Shabangu



FULL CRY: His Majesty joined by throngs of regiments in song and dance.



SIGODLO: Emakhosikati joined by Sigodlo as they sing and dance before the King's address.



CONGRATS: Deputy Prime Minister Themba Masuku congratulating Mbilaneni area Indvuna Thami Thikazi after he was announced as Indvuna of Inyatsi at Mbangweni Royal Residence.



PREMIER: Prime Minister Ambrose Dlamini among the regiment.



MINGLING: Senate Deputy President Ndumiso Mdluli and UNESWA Vice-Chancellor Professor Justice Thwala after the day's event.



ROYALTY: Emazinyane also joined the song and dance session led by His Majesty before addressing the libutfo.



HAPPY PEOPLE: Dumisa Dlamini, Senator Chief Ngalonkhulu Mabuza, Chief Mgebiseni of Ngculwini, Masiko Dlamini and Dr Daniel Dlamini after the dispersing libutfo.



**ESWATINI
SUGAR
ASSOCIATION**

INVITATION TO TENDER

Eswatini Sugar Association is an umbrella organization of sugar millers and growers and amongst its key functions is the marketing of sugar and molasses. Tenderers are invited from suitable companies registered and based in Eswatini for the provision of the following service:

ONE-TONNE BAG REFURBISHING

Collection, refurbishment & delivery to the mills as well as disposal of scrapped 1 metric tonne multi-trip bags.

Interested and qualifying companies may obtain further details by collecting the Request for Proposal (RFP) documents, which will be available from **Tuesday 7 January 2020**, from the Commercial Admin Assistant at our Mbabane office or email: nmamba@esa.co.sz after payment of a non-refundable fee of **E500.00** per RFP. The deadline for buying of tender documents is **17 January 2020 at 16h30**.

Tender proposals must be hand delivered to the address below. **Late tender submissions will be disqualified.**

Eswatini Sugar Association
4th Floor Nkhotfotjeni Building
Corner Msakato & Dzeliwe Streets
Mbabane

Tel: +268 2411 7600



**ESWATINI
SUGAR
ASSOCIATION**

UNITED FOR GROWTH
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SHISELWENI NEWS

...With

Starsky Mkhonta

Nhlangano office

Tobacco Complex, Cnr King George Masengule Streets
Opposite SEDCO PremisesTel: 2207 5159 Cell: 7621 5081
Email: Starsky@realnet.co.sz

HLATIKULU AIMS AT TAKING LEAD IN ATTAINING HIS MAJESTY'S 2022 VISION

AS the year begins, the Hlatikulu Town Board has predicted a successful 2020 in terms of development and wants to take the lead in attaining His Majesty's first world status by 2022 vision.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Bongani Dlamini in an interview with Shiselweni News said with a dedicated team of councillors and management and staff, the town would turn things around this year and be an investor destination.

"To me 2020 is our year as a town and we will make things happen.

We don't want any stumbling block on our way to success.

Away

It is now two years away from His Majesty's target for the country to attain the first world status by the year 2022.

Hlatikulu must be upgrading and empowered to reach the status of other towns and cities," said the CEO.

Dlamini told Shiselweni News that

Hlatikulu had a number of influential people who will also be coming on board in as far as the development of the town is concerned.

He noted that there were those holding senior positions both in the public and private sectors who had to find ways of developing the town.

Begins

He stated that as the year begins, all those resident in the town should be seen making a meaningful contribution towards its development.



VISION 2022: Hlatikulu Town Board CEO Bongani Dlamini.

Indvuna yenkhundla thankful to children

MASEYISINI Indvuna Yenkhundla Sisho Khumalo's children hosted a surprise birthday party for him where they presented him with gifts.

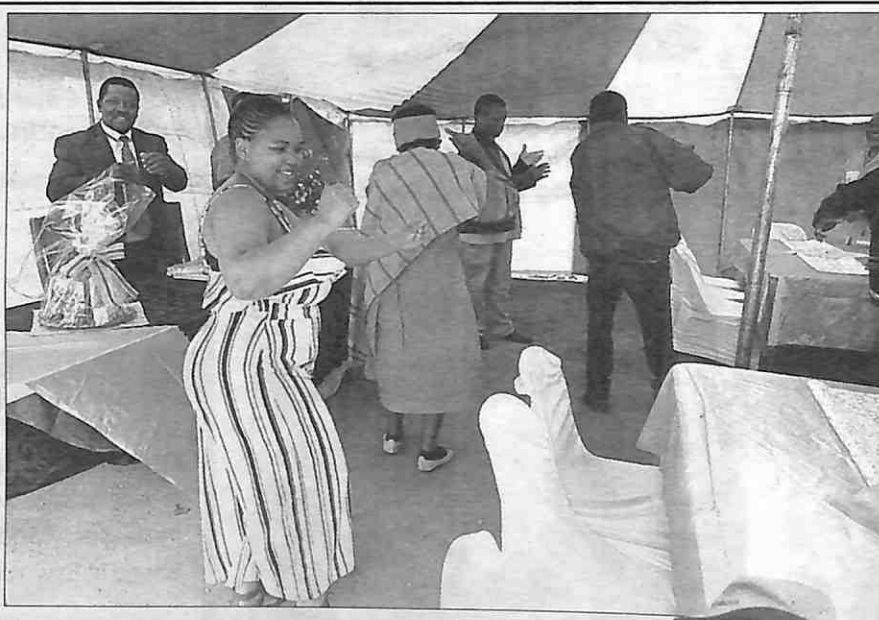
Khumalo turned 60 in August last year and his 14 children decided to throw a surprise birthday party last weekend where a cow was slaughtered.

The family home is at Makhosini. Khumalo was shocked last Saturday when his children informed him not go anywhere as there was an important gathering he needed to address.

However it later turned out to be a surprise party when he was taken to a well decorated tent and informed that the children had organised the party in his honour.

"I turned 60 last August and I did not even think my children were planning to do anything like this as I had long passed 60, I am grateful to my children for what they have done, he said.

Khumalo expressed happiness that all his children are united and they planned all this in unison.



WOLOLO: Maseyisini Indvuna Yenkhundla Sisho Khumalo (far left) celebrating with some family members during his surprise birthday party.

Take maize farming seriously- businessman Jika

BUSINESSMAN Jika Ndlangamandla, also a prominent maize farmer in the Shiselweni region, has advised Emaswati to take maize farming seriously.

Ndlangamandla, popularly known in the transport business, said even though climate change is impacting badly in farming, Emaswati should not give up on maize farming.

The businessman said personally, he enjoyed farming more than any other business.

He has maize fields measuring almost 25 hectares near Mbukwane, his home area.

"I have already planted maize in all the fields despite the scarcity of rains because I have not thrown in the towel," Ndlangamandla told Shiselweni News.

He said government should see to it that farming, in particular maize



BOUNTIFUL: Part of the almost 25 hectares of maize fields belonging to Jika Ndlangamandla near Mbukwane.

production, was promoted all over the country and the youth encouraged to take it seriously.

"If things could be done my way, I

would have agriculture made a compulsory subject in the school syllabus," he said.

The businessman stressed that the

culture of agriculture was the way to go.



Somtongo MP to address challenges

SOMTONGO Member of Parliament (MP) Dumisani Mbhamali has set goals for his constituency to achieve in 2020.

The MP said he does not want to solely rely on government assistance, owing to the fact that currently government is financially struggling.

He stated that one of his strategies would be approaching other organisations to assist in some of the projects that need funding as his constituency is known to be poverty and drought stricken.

Turning

"Let 2020 be a turning point for the people of this constituency and those of Lavumisa in general.

Let us not fold our arms and hope that everything will be done by government.

We should be seen doing something to address the challenges we face," he said.

Mbhamali said as a constituency, they were also faced with poor road infrastructure and some public transport operators have even removed their vehicles due to the appalling state of the roads.



STANDARD 5 RESULTS 2019



TOP P/PEAK PUPIL TO PURSUE MEDICINE

BY SIZWE DLAMINI
Pigg's Peak

TOP Peak Primary School pupil (12) Mandisa Mamba wants to be a doctor.

Mandisa, a daughter to a teacher, attained a Merit pass in the 2019 Eswatini Primary Certificate (EPC) examinations with an aggregate of 77 per cent, placing her in the top 10.

Mandisa, who originally wanted to pursue her secondary education at St Mark's but settled for Mhlatane High, said Science and English were her favourite subjects.

"I am happy with my performance. I told my parents that I will be in the top 10 in Eswatini in 2019 and I did."

I really enjoyed my Science and English papers during the examinations," she said. She stated that her study timetable began at 7 until 8pm throughout her exams as her mother excused her from family chores. Mandisa added that her mother is her role model.

"My mother Ntombi Dlamini is my role model and she teaches at Lubulini."



PROUD MOM: Top Peak Primary School pupil (12) Mandisa Mamba and her mother Ntombi Dlamini celebrate his achievements. (Pic: Sizwe Dlamini)

I am really happy to have made her proud", she said.

Top pupil wants mom to buy him grasshopper shoes

BY SIZWE DLAMINI
Pigg's Peak

FUTURE physiotherapist and top Ntfontjeni Primary School pupil Sisekelo Ncongwane (12) has pleaded with his parents to buy him a pair of low cut grasshopper shoes as a gift for his achievement.

Ncongwane passed with a Merit in the 2019 Eswatini Primary Certificate (EPC) examinations with an aggregate of 77 per cent, placing him in the top 10 of the kingdom. When interviewed on his achievement, Ncongwane said he also won his

school an award in the 2019 national agriculture quiz.

"I am very happy with my achievement and hope I will continue doing well in all my subjects in the future. I really enjoyed the English paper during the examinations."

Physiotherapist

I want to be a physiotherapist upon finishing school," he said.

Ncongwane added that he was sad to be leaving his old school. He said he really enjoyed his time at Ntfontjeni Primary where she had the chance to win the national agriculture quiz in 2019 for the school with his classmate and another top pupil Mongi Dlamini.



EVELYN BARING PUPIL EXPECTS LAPTOP FROM PARENTS

BY STARSKY MKHONTA
Nhlanguano

SINESIPHO Ziyanda Mdluli of Evelyn Baring Primary School, who got 78 per cent aggregate, said she was promised a laptop by her parents in the event she did well.

She said the pledge by her parents motivated her, hence she worked hard to excel.

"I got support from my parents and teachers, hence today I am celebrating. Yes, I was aware that I was supposed to pass but to be counted amongst the top 10 in the country was something else. I never thought I would reach such heights,

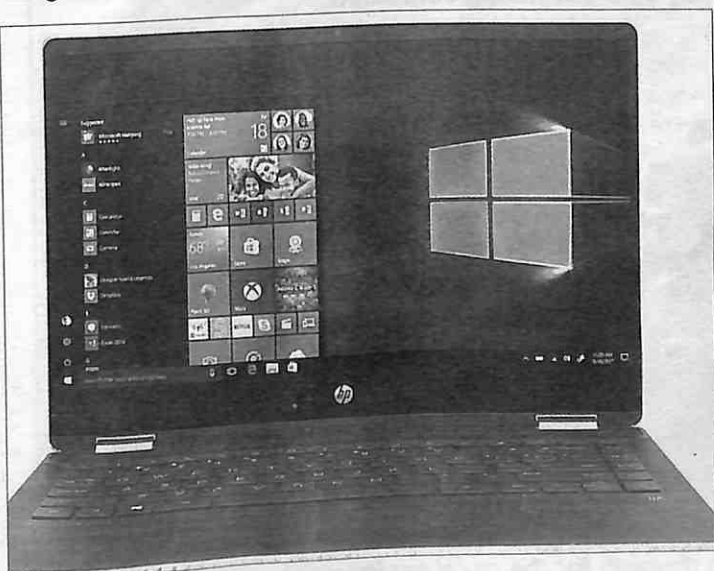
however that does not mean I doubt myself," said the visibly excited pupil.

Sinesipho said she would continue working hard as her wish was to excel even in high school.

Her mother Kholiwe Mdluli, a teacher at Mshengu Primary said her daughter showed commitment in her school work all the time.

"It's the fruits of hard work, she has made us proud as we played our part as her parents and are celebrating today. We expect her to excel even in Form Three," the mother said.

The overly excited mother said as promised, her daughter deserved the laptop.



Fourth best pupil following on sister's footsteps- father

BY STARSKY MKHONTA
Nhlanguano

A father to one of the country's top 10 pupils in the Standard Five 2019 results says his son is following on his sister's footsteps.

Bongumusa Siphosethu Vilane from Evelyn Baring Primary emerged the

fourth best pupil and his father Hilton said the pupil's sister Sikhulile excelled in both her Forms Three and Five examinations as she is currently studying in Europe.

"We don't see anything stopping our children from excelling as we are a God fearing family," the father said. This pupil obtained 79 per cent aggregate.

According to his father, Bongumusa informed them that his sister was his role model and always wanted to emulate her. Hilton, who is Deputy Principal at Edwaleni High School (Ka-Nkobe,) said his son has always put his studies first with less playtime. Vilane said his son's dream was to pursue a career in technology.

ESWATINI'S STD V SECOND BEST PUPIL HAS ALWAYS BEEN TOPS

BY STARSKY MKHONTA
Nhlanguano

BEING pronounced Eswatini's second best pupil in the Standard Five results has come as no surprise to the pupil's parents.

Her mother Mathidiso Dlamini said the pupil Refiloe Dlamini has always been on position one since she started Grade One. Refiloe is a Sesotho name meaning Sipiwe.

The genius from Eqinisweni Primary got 80 per cent aggregate.

Her achievement is now the talk of the community after making history as the top pupil in the Shiselweni region and second best in the country. The 13-

year-old is under the care of her mother who lost her husband in 2011. As a single parent, she has raised her child through earnings from her Mobile Money business in Nhlanguano town, where she stated as an airtime vendor.

Keeping

"I have been keeping all her results since Grade One and she has always been on position one," said the mother.

The mother said her daughter was a precious jewel and she would cherish this moment for the rest of her life. She said even though she was a single parent, she was able to cater for her daughter's needs.

Meanwhile, Refiloe's uncle Sicelo Ngozo found with the family at their

home at Thunzini, shared that his nephew never wanted to be a failure in anything. He said her achievements were no surprise to them as a family.

Refiloe said her family as well as teachers all contributed to her achievement. She also had time to prepare for the examinations.

Aspires

She stated that she aspires to be a doctor upon finishing her studies and as a reward for her achievement, her mother promised to buy her a laptop.

On another note, Duncan Nzima the Principal at the school, was thrilled upon learning that his pupil was rated amongst the best. He said she has done both the school and her parents proud.

NKEMBENI ROYAL FIELDS WEEDING



STOMP: Lacwebetelako stomping the ground as they sang and danced during the weeding of Nkembeni Royal Fields on Friday. This was the last day of the weeding of Royal Fields. His Majesty King Mswati III dispersed the regiments on Saturday, marking the end of Incwala. (Pics: Simon Shabangu)



Umbutfo Nala among the throngs of regiments present on the day.



ATILUDLE: Lacwebetelako hard at work.



PRESENT: Umbutfo Donsumoya, Bhodlela and Luphotse from His Majesty's Correctional Services.



ENJOY: Prince Hlangusempi, Sigombeni Dlamini and Dr Daniel Dlamini could not miss out.



HAPPY MOOD: Ludzeludze MP Vusi Swali, ACC Deputy Commissioner Maphevu Ndwandwe, High Court Judge Ticheme Dlamini, MP Jomo Dlamini and TSC Member Lenhle Makawosi Masuku pose after the duties of the day.



KUYO: Song and dance was the order of the day as the weeding continued.



ATILUDLE: Emabutfo weeding the royal fields.



ALL OUT: Ingaja also came through for the royal assignment.

ESWATINI INCORPORATED: 2022 & BEYOND

'MOVING FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION'

ISSUE NO. 110



The minister of education was joined by senior officials from the ministry as she announced the results.

GOVERNMENT PLAYING WITH FIRE

ON Friday, Education and Training Minister Lady Howard-Mabuza announced that no public school will be allowed to charge top-up this year.

This would be a fatal decision for the ministry and government, if this is it and there is nothing done to cushion the need for top-up.

Let me caution the ministry on its decision, because if Government does not announce an immediate review of the current Free Primary Education (FPE) grant per child, which has remained unchanged in the 10 years of its introduction, here is what is likely to happen;

- Many public schools in the country will not function or operate;

- We will have many pupils in public schools leaving to joining private schools, more dropouts and the little that remains of our standards will crash;

- Principals will drop the ball; they are already tired of chasing after the ministry to pay on time their quarterly grants to keep schools operational. The little, in terms of top-up fees which has been their mainstay in terms of reliable income and kept the hyenas at bay, would have been stopped;

- The schools support staff will leave in droves or only come to school when there is certainty that they will be paid their money;

- This will turn up the already high volume of discontent and pressure will be put on government to either scrap the whole FPE altogether or else they make the situation untenable for the country.

...without top-up schools will collapse, education doomed

The paying of the top-up was not an illegal act by the schools as it is contained in the FPE Act of 2010. The law permits schools to charge top-up for specific costs provided at least two-thirds of the parents agree for the same in their annual general meeting to approve the school budget and sign in the requisition forms for same, which the minister has to see and approve.

The reasons for doing so are discussed by parents, who are the major school system stakeholders and they do so in the quest to ensure that the school operations are not affected and they keep it in good habitable shape.

Many of the schools now live on the mercy of suppliers, whose products and services are not regulated by the ministry and keep on increasing every year. Some of the things that push prices even higher when supplying government is the uncertainty in payment.

Government has in the past 10 years; despite the support from the European Union (EU) for Grade One in the past six to seven years, not reviewed the grant. It is even worse now with the EU having stopped paying for the first grade.

When time came for government to release the grant on time, it has given this excuse or the

other, pushing the schools in further crisis.

Government needs to do more than what it has done over the years to improve the standard of our education at primary school level, ever since the FPE was introduced under the pressure of a court order in 2010.

Look, the EPC results released by the minister on Friday indicate that they were the best in 10 years.

The 10 years is before the FPE. In terms of schooling efficiency, nothing changed.

The only reason that changed the numbers; the decision by Cabinet to remove English Language as the passing subject resulted in

the 3.72 per cent increase.

Otherwise the 1 500 pupils who were recorded as passed would have failed, and we would have achieved even a far lesser percentage pass rate than last year.

The reason for such performances is the simple challenges we have struggled to eliminate ever since we introduced FPE.

There is a direct connection between the state of our economy and our education system or even health. Our economy has not recovered to the levels prior 2009

and our capacity to deliver on key services remained challenged.

So the minister and government cannot just

say no to top-up without giving the schools alternative relief.

The situation in our schools as we speak is already dire. The principals working with parents have been trying to keep the fires burning. Anything that affects such a good working relationship and give principals reason to be in schools and look forward to the next day will be disaster.

The ministry must know that there are two types of parents in our schools nowadays or should I say three.

The first type is the one that is interested in the quality of education his or her child receives and is willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that this happens.

This type of a parent does not necessarily afford private school education but can come through for his or her child should the school demand that top-up fee is paid to ensure that education is smooth.

The second type is the one that doesn't care much but responded to the call that every child must be sent to school.

Whenever the proposal to top-up the current FPE grant is made, they are quick to run to the ministry or anywhere to say my school is charging this or the other without even reasoning whether such a decision was the only remedy the school had under its circumstances. The top-up is often demanded because there are compelling reasons why the school needs the extra cash. Orphans are not included in this group, their situation is different.

This type in fact would be even happy to see the whole FPE grant programme collapse and are not willing to help.

The third type is government, which is willing and pushing for FPE, but does not admit that currently it cannot afford and is embarrassed to come back to the nation to ask for support.

Government is currently trying to balance too many things that don't add up and is failing. Surely it needs some help.

It is in education and health where you can test government's capacity to provide services because those are fundamental for any nation. But it is becoming a norm now that when children go to school or tertiary and we visit hospitals, we are confronted with these realities of not coping.

I am definitely not a prophet of doom here, but just warning the ministry to review its decision immediately if it is not prepared to review the grant per child and ensure that it pays schools on time.

Already, the environment in our schools and in the public service is toxic as a result of government's inability to pay the cost of living adjustment (CoLA) in three years.

Surely we don't need at this time anything that will alienate not only teachers but parents by sending their children to non-functional schools.

Madam minister and government, it was enough to deal with only the CoLA situation, which so far you have managed to handle, despite the costly court and sometimes violent interventions, we are not ready to deal with a now combined force of angry and frustrated pupils and parents.

They say to be forewarned is to be forearmed.



ON THIS DAY

...JANUARY 6

1941 - Richard Widmark made his debut on radio in 'The Home of the Brave.'

1941 - Alice Marble made her professional tennis debut when she defeated Ruth Hardwick of Great Britain at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

1942 - The first commercial around-the-world airline flight took place. Pan American Airlines was the company that made history with the feat.

1942 - The National Collegiate Football Rules Committee abolished the Y formation.

1945 - The Battle of the Bulge ended with 130 000 German and 77,000 Allied casualties.

1950 - Britain recognised the Communist government of China.

1952 - 'Peanuts' debuted in Sunday papers across the United States.

1963 - 'Wild Kingdom' premiered on NBC.

1967 - US and South Vietnamese forces launched a major offensive, known as Operation 'Deckhouse V', in the Mekong River delta.

1974 - CBS radio debuted 'Radio Mystery Theatre.'

1975 - ABC-TV debuted 'A.M. America.'

1982 - William G. Bonin was convicted in Los Angeles, CA, of being the "freeway killer" who had murdered 14 young men and boys.

1987 - After a 29-year lapse, the Ford Thunderbird was presented with the Motor Trend Car of the Year Award. It was the first occurrence of a repeat winner of the award.

1994 - Figure skater Nancy Kerrigan was clubbed on the right leg by an assailant at Cobo Arena in Detroit, MI. Four men were later sentenced to prison for the attack, including Tonya Harding's ex-husband.

1998 - The spacecraft Lunar Prospector was launched into orbit around the moon. The craft was crashed into the moon, in an effort to find water under the lunar surface, on July 31, 1999.

1999 - The 106th US Congress opened. The first item on the agenda was the impeachment proceedings of US President Bill Clinton. The trial was set to begin January 7, 1999.

1999 - Bob Newhart received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

2004 - In the United Arab Emirates, construction began on the Burj Khalifa skyscraper. Upon completion it was the world's largest building.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Rowan Atkinson
English actor, comedian
Born: January 6, 1955
(age 64 years)



Syd Barrett
English singer, songwriter
Born: January 6, 1946

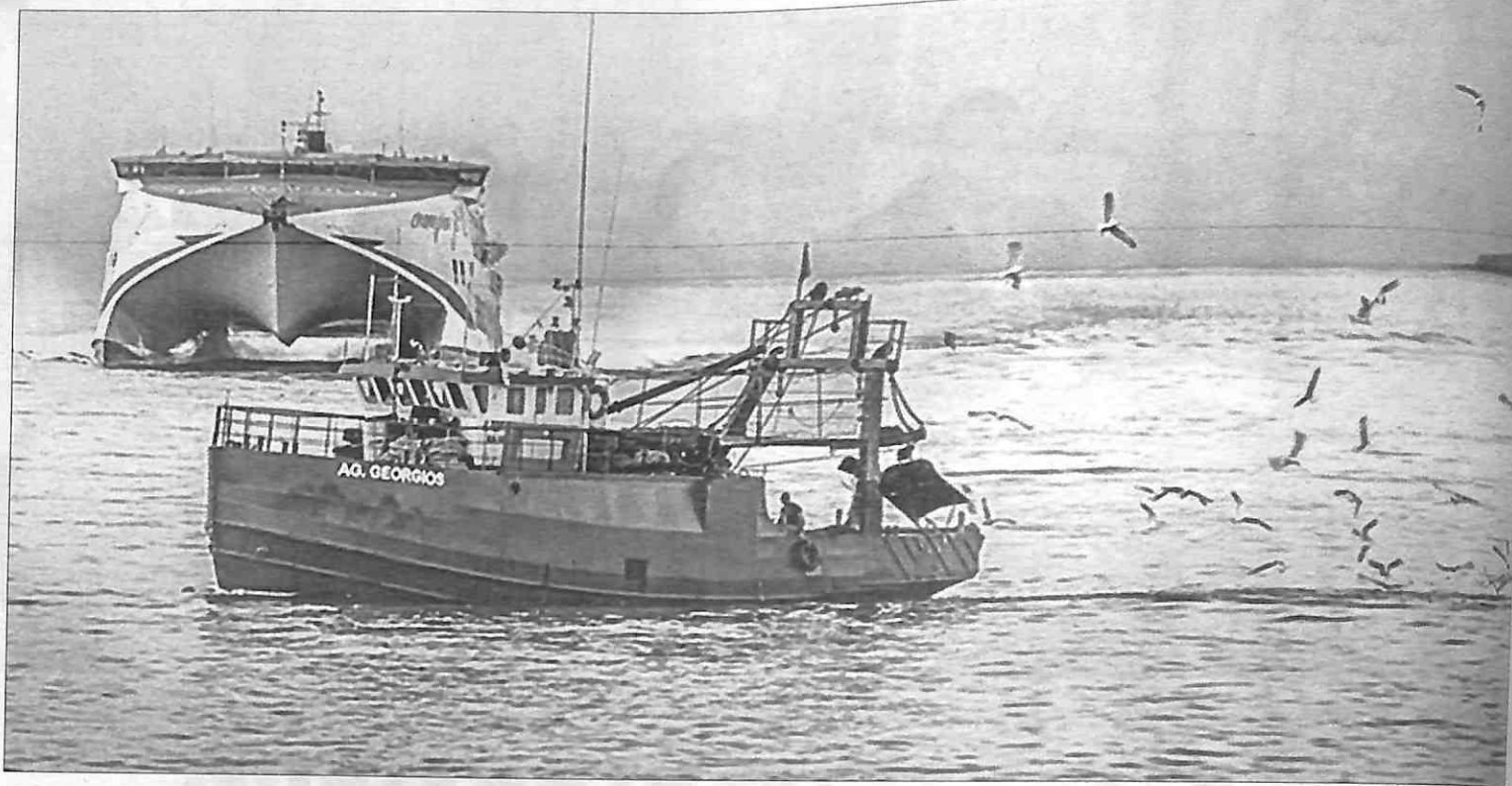


WHAT THE

LAW

SAYS

Utsini umtsetfo



THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ACT, 2019

Application of security given

34. Any security or net proceeds of sale held in respect of any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing may be used to -

(a) Discharge any forfeiture ordered in terms of this Act;

(b) Pay all fines or a contribution towards a fine, for offences in terms of this Act or penalties imposed in terms of this Act, arising out of the use of or in connection with the vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing; or

(c) To discharge all orders for costs in proceedings in terms of this Act arising out of the use of or in connection with the vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing.

Liability for loss, damage or deterioration of things in custody

35. The Government shall not be liable to any person for any loss, damage or deterioration in the condition of any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing while in the custody of the Government in terms of this Act if the loss, damage or deterioration is not due to negligence on the part of Government.

Removal of items from custody

36. Any person who knowingly or is reasonably expected to know that a vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing is held in the custody of the Government in terms of this Act and who removes that vessel, vehicle, aircraft or thing, commits an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding twenty five thousand Emalangeni (E25, 000.00) or a term of imprisonment not exceeding five (5) years or both.

Forfeiture orders by Court

37. (1) If any person is convicted of an offence in terms of this Act, the Court may, in addition to any other penalty, order that any fishing vessel, together with its gear, equipment, any fish caught unlawfully or the proceeds of sale of that fish or any perishables, and any vehicle or aircraft used or involved in the commission of that offence be forfeited to the State.

(2) If any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing

seized in terms of this Act, or any security or net proceeds of sale in respect thereof is not forfeited or applied in the discharge of any fine, order for costs or penalty imposed in terms of this Act, it shall be made available to the registered owner or a nominee of the registered owner or, in the absence of such persons, a person who appears to be entitled to it.

(3) If any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing is released upon the lodging of security, an order for forfeiture shall, unless the court for special reasons fixes a smaller sum, operate as an order for forfeiture of the security.

(4) If any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing has been released upon the lodging of security, the Court may order any person convicted of an offence in connection therewith and the owner of the vessel, vehicle, aircraft or other thing concerned, whether or not that person is an accused, to pay the difference between the amount lodged in respect of security and the aggregate value of the forfeited property.

Disposal of forfeited things

38. (1) Any vessel, including its gear, cargo and fuel, and any vehicle or aircraft, gear, net or other equipment, explosive, fire-arm or poison ordered to be forfeited in terms of this Act shall be disposed of in a manner that the Minister may determine.

(2) The owner or any other person with real security in any property forfeited in terms of this Act may apply to court for the release of the property in question or for the realization of that person's security in the property, as the case may be.

(3) The Court may release the property contemplated above or order the realization of the security in the property, if the applicant proves that the applicant is in no way implicated in the commission of the offence and that the applicant could not have prevented it.

Jurisdiction of Courts

39. (1) Any act or omission in contravention of any of the provisions of this Act, which is committed -

(a) By any person within Eswatini;

(b) Outside of the territory of Eswatini by any

citizen of Eswatini or any person ordinarily resident in Eswatini; or

(c) By any person on board any fishing vessel from Eswatini, shall be dealt with and judicial proceedings taken as if that act or omission took place in the territory of Eswatini.

(2) Any offence in terms of this Act shall, for purposes in relation to jurisdiction of a Court to try the offence, be deemed to have been committed within the area of jurisdiction of the Court in which the prosecution is instituted.

Documentary evidence

40. (1) The Minister may issue a certificate stating that -

(a) A specified vessel or person was or was not on a specified date the holder of any specified license, permit, authorization or certificate of registration;

(b) An appended document is a true copy of the licence, authorization or certificate of registration for a specified vessel or person and that specified conditions were those of a licence, permit, authorization or certificate of registration issued in respect of a specified vessel or person;

(c) A particular location or area of water was on a specified date within Eswatini's national waters;

(d) An appended chart shows the boundaries on a specified date of Eswatini's national waters and territory; or

(e) A particular position or catch report was given in respect of a specified vessel.

(2) Any certificate issued in terms of this section shall -

(a) Be signed by the person who made it; and

(b) State the section under which it is issued.

(3) In the absence of evidence to the contrary, a document purporting to be a certificate issued in terms of this section shall be deemed to be a certificate and to have been duly given.

(4) In any proceedings for an offence in terms of this Act, a certificate as to the cause and manner of death or injury of any fish, signed by the Principal Secretary, shall, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, be sufficient evidence as to the matters in that certificate.

DECOLONISING AFRICA - SECURING THE BASE



By Bongiwe Tutu

AFRICA has undergone a significant stride of structural changes that have influenced the mindsets and convictions of the African people.

From the guise of bringing advancements, the continent has been placed under slavery, colonialism, apartheid and post-colonial submissions that have continuously been challenged through social movements, literature, art and other forms of influential expressionism. African discourse leaders and authors such as Kwame Nkrumah, Sol Plaatje, S.E.K. Mqhayi, Dr WB Rhusana, Nontsizi Mqgweho, Mazisi Kunene, Bantu Steve Biko, Chinua Achebe, Xolela Mangcu and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, to mention a few, have dosed sharp intellectual injections coursing the veins of the African Renaissance, Pan Africanism and Decolonisation of the African continent.

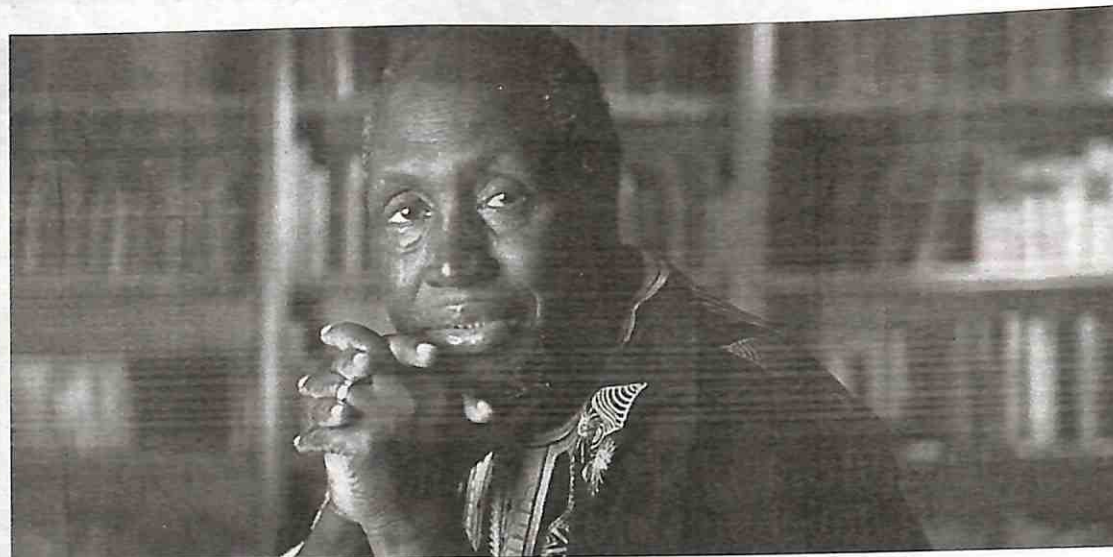
Pressing on the fundamentals of a decolonised African state, renowned Kenyan professor and author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o informs of the boundaries needed to break down, to decolonise Africa and secure its base.

The most apparent problem with many African people is the sight of Africa through the eyes of an outsider, said Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. He said this was an imperial intent specifically designed through languages and policies, which normalised the abnormal, to foster postcolonial measurements that would be indestructible for many generations.

"One of the problems of looking at Africa with an eye of an outsider is that you look at the state as a looting mechanism, not as a responsibility. Have you ever heard of anybody robbing their own house?" said Wa Thiong'o, exemplifying the lack of ownership that many Africans have to their continent. He said this mentality removes us from the responsibility of decolonising the continent and securing our base.

Wa Thiong'o said having colonial mentality strips us from our rightful ownership to the resources on the African soil. "Africa has to control its resources, we have to make things with the resources and exchange them with other countries just in the same way as other countries exchange final products with us – using our gold, copper and diamonds, amongst other resources.

Because when you secure the base you can interact with the world, through the basis of equality and



INFORMS: Kenyan professor and author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o

respect.

Wa Thiong'o spoke of the imbalance of power between Africa and Western states, affirming that the West shows less representation for African goods and service, when Western goods and services are overwhelmingly represented across the African continent.

"You hear of joint military services but soldiers are always on African soil, and Western state companies are always drilling resources on African soil. Further, Africa's own banking systems are not evident in the Western states, but their branches are dispersed across the African continent."

According to Wa Thiong'o, Africa has over the last 100 years been the eternal donor to the West but has been represented as a state that has always been reliant on aid from the Western community.

Wa Thiong'o said Africa has to find a way of reversing this, by becoming the makers of our own raw materials, to think of Africa alone and Africa's relation to the world.

Countries such as Korea and Japan do not have raw materials but are able to manufacture cars that roam on African roads, said Wa Thiong'o.

"It's time for Africa to do things for themselves," said Wa Thiong'o, it is not a seeking of isolation but a matter of upholding values of Pan Africanism and having ownership and responsibility of the continent, he said.

Wa Thiong'o presented a map of Africa indicating the depth of the continent, that more than five continents in the world can fit into the continent, "so why is Africa still the poorest?" he asked. Being the largest continent and holding vast lands of resources, and yet it is still the poorest continent.

"We have to realise that we are one as Africa and connect and progress," said Wa Thiong'o emphasising the importance of ownership and unity for a decolonised Africa.

Colonising African languages as a tool for a colonised mind.

Language has been used as a method of subjugation in colonial conquest, and presented as an instrument of learning, advancing and interacting with the rest of the world. Colonisation saw that the conquered despise and denote their own languages while

living through the languages of their conquerors.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o referred to a question posed by one of Africa's literature and philosophy pioneers, Kwame Nkrumah who asked; "Are we really sure that we are in touch with the nation and the continent, is the independent African state now in existence for some 50 years, in touch with its people?"

"How can it be in touch when it has embraced European languages, spoken and used by only 10 per cent of the population, as a language of power, commerce, law and even justice?" adjudicated Wa Thiong'o.

On the African nation today, the majority are rendered linguistically deaf and mute by government policies that have set European languages as the normative mission, said Wa Thiong'o. The professor affirmed that this was, in fact, the result of the fulfilment of a conscious imperial design in the history of conquest.

Wa Thiong'o highlighted exemplifiers of the colonial conquest and its results on the language of the vanquished and its people. He informed that when imperial Japan took over Korea in 1910, they made Korea use their language and gave them Japanese names. The colonies saw the importance of intellectualising empires of the mind, setting a metaphysical empire of language and literature. In the 19th century the English established practical language policies in India that placed English as a medium of communication in order to create a class of people who are Indian in blood and colour, but English in mentality.

Wa Thiong'o said the French and Portuguese used a process called assimilation. Language was at the centre of assimilation, to create a linguistically Westernised middle man who would automatically carry out the intent of the ruler onto the masses. It was necessary to reach the mental core by a solid psychological bond against the day when their progressive emancipation ends, and they are French in language, thought and spirit. "The colonial utility of educating the African masses was discovered; creating empires of the mind," said Wa Thiong'o, "and France still controls the national treasuries of many African countries today," he added.

According to Wa Thiong'o, the suc-

cess of the empire of the mind or colonies of the mind can be seen in the late defenders of the dominance of European languages in Africa. He said there was an appearance of some African intellectuals and policymakers who uphold the dominance of European languages in Africa.

"Colonisation of the mind is when we can think that African languages are impediments to our ability to engage with the world," said Wa Thiong'o, adding that there is a further distortion in the dynamic – when we are not only proud of knowing English but also proud of not knowing our own languages.

"They gave us their access to their accents in exchange for our access to our resources – you gave Africa your resources of your accents, and Africa gave you access to the resources of our land.

Accents for access – that is post-colonial Africa," he added.

"But this business that English must thrive on the graveyard of African languages – we have to really reject that. "That in order for English to be, then African languages must cease to be – that's really absurd and we have to reject that"

Wa Thiong'o said that what was important is the relationship between languages, as no other language was better than the other. He said it was an empowerment to know one's own home language even with all other languages in the world, but a service of enslavement to not know one's own home language.

"We must acknowledge more than our own to own our own – you can use English, but do not let English use you," affirmed Wa Thiong'o.

"Remember that there are forces that will never want us to be aware of the dimension of our presence in the world – To counter these forces, we have to know ourselves – this is the importance of decolonising ourselves and securing our base," he said. Wa Thiong'o said we have to make a conscious language policy that will pour in resources and open doors for the African language. We might embrace the fact that we have a number of languages as Africans, but do not put any resources into that is imperialising.

"We have to know ourselves before we can secure the base," said Wa Thiong'o.

Wit & Wisdom

Will's 10 Favourite Witty Funny Quotes

1. I do not want the peace which passeth understanding, I want the understanding which bringeth peace. - Helen Keller
2. People seldom do what they believe in, they do what is convenient, and then repent. - Bob Dylan
3. Is life worth living? It all depends on the liver. - William James
4. The wise man has long ears and a short tongue. - Anonymous.
5. Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens. - Jimi Hendrix
6. Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend. - Unknown, but often attributed to Albert Camus
7. The secret of a good life is to have the right loyalties and hold them in the right scale of values. - Norman Thomas
8. Democracy is the process by which people choose the man who'll get the blame. - Bertrand Russell
9. Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former. - Albert Einstein
10. I've had a wonderful time, but this wasn't it. - Groucho Marx

Guy's 10 Favourite Witty and Funny Quotes

1. Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read. - Groucho Marx
2. Coffee isn't my cup of tea. - Samuel Goldwyn
3. I'm an excellent housekeeper. Every time I get a divorce, I keep the house. - Zsa Zsa Gabor
4. I'm always amazed to hear of air crash victims so badly mutilated that they have to be identified by their dental records. What I can't understand is, if they don't know who you are, how do they know who your dentist is? - Paul Merton
5. At my age I do what Mark Twain did. I get my daily paper, look at the obituaries page and if I'm not there I carry on as usual. - Patrick Moore
6. Operator! Give me the number for 911. - Homer Simpson
7. I have met a lot of hardboiled eggs in my time, but you're twenty minutes. - Oscar Wilde
8. Rarely is the question asked: is our children learning? - George W Bush
9. I saw six men kicking and punching the mother-in-law. My neighbour said 'Are you going to help?' I said, 'No, Six should be enough.' - Les Dawson
10. My formula for success is rise early, work late, and strike oil. - Paul Getty

More Short Witty Quotes

1. Now, now my good man, this is no time for making enemies. - Voltaire on his deathbed in response to a priest asking that he renounce Satan.
2. Wagner's music is better than it sounds. - Mark Twain.
3. I like work: it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours. - Jerome K. Jerome
4. It takes a long time to grow an old friend. - John Leonard
5. There are three faithful friends, an old wife, an old dog, and ready money. - Benjamin Franklin
6. I think; therefore I am. - Rene Descartes
7. I'm a godmother, that's a great thing to be, a godmother. She calls me god for short, that's cute, I taught her that. - Ellen DeGeneres

BUSINESS UPDATE

YOUR DAILY SOURCE OF FINANCIAL/BUSINESS NEWS

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VITALS

Prime Rate	10%
First National Bank	
Inflation Rate	1.6%
Central Statistical Office	
Mortgage Rate	10%
Swaziland Building Society	
Bank Rate	6.5%
Central Bank	
Petrol (u)	E13.65 per litre
Replacement	E13.70 per litre
Diesel	E13.65 per litre
Paraffin	E 9.15 per litre
Engen Garage	

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Correct as at 2 JAN 2020

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
US Dollar / SZL	13.9840	14.0340
British Pound/SZL	18.4903	18.5565
Japanese Yen/SZL	7.7483	7.7753
Swiss France/SZL	14.4135	14.4591
Botswana Pula/SZL	1.3187	1.3318
Australian Dollar/SZL	9.7874	9.8238
Canadian Dollar/SZL	10.7702	10.8045
Mozambique Meticals/SZL	5.5211	5.5942
Euro/SZL	15.6719	15.7279
Gold	1,520.5500	
Oil	68.96	

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Standard Bank

FMD UPDATE:

Partial lifting of import restriction still intact

BY BAHLE GAMA

THE ministry of agriculture's partial lifting of import restrictions on processed products of animal origin is still intact.

Communications Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture Nomvuselelo Dlamini said the foot and mouth disease (FMD) in the Molemole District, Limpopo Province, was still under monitoring.

"Our ministry is in constant communication with South Africa and they have specifically stated that the outbreak is being monitored.

This means the risk of further spread of the disease within RSA and into Eswatini territory remains very high," she said.

On November 27, the ministry of agriculture released a statement that disclosed that on November 6, the Republic of South Africa reported an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the Molemole District.

The outbreak was reported in a farm keeping cattle under extensive grazing and feedlot. The report

stated that the source and extent of the outbreak was unknown at the time, adding that control measures were yet to be consolidated.

It further stated that to protect the foot and mouth disease status of Eswatini, government suspended the importation of all products of cloven-hoofed animal origin, pending further clarification of the situation, particularly the extent of the outbreak and the control measures

implemented.

On November 26, RSA submitted a follow-up report to the Office International de Epizooties (OIE), providing further clarifications which led to the ministry partially lifting the import restriction.

The statement stated that progression of the FMD outbreak in RSA was closely followed by the Department of Veterinary and Livestock Services. Updates would

be issued and/or implemented as soon as practicable.

"The ministry reiterates that the overarching objective is to resume normal trade without compromising the hard earned OIE recognised Eswatini 'FMD free status where vaccination is not practiced'. Appreciation is extended to all stakeholders for their cooperation thus far, and implore for continued support in this regard," stated the statement.

PROHIBITED PRODUCTS:

1. Prohibition of importation of fresh meat from cloven-hoofed animals derived from RSA territory: carcasses, cuts, beef-fat and any other product of cloven hoofed animal origin, including milk, that have not been processed by cooking or pasteurisation.

2. Prohibition of importation of live cloven-hoofed animals derived from the whole RSA territory: Importation of cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, sheep, goats and wild ungulates from the whole RSA territory remains prohibited.

3. Prohibition of importation of hay from the whole RSA territory: The importation of hay and related products remains prohibited since they are risky products.



Govt net debt to reach over E30bn

BY BAHLE GAMA

GOVERNMENT's net debt is forecasted to be at around E30.348 billion in March.

This is as per the World Economic Outlook report released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

This shows an increase of E2.4 billion when compared to the last reported figure which stood at E27 559 billion in March last year.

Projected

"Looking ahead, Eswatini government net debt is projected to stand at E55 071 billion in March 2024," reads the report.

Also highlighted in the report is that the country's real GDP growth was forecasted to be at 1.300 per cent in Dec 2019 which showed a decrease from the last reported figure of 2.351 per cent in December 2018.

Looking ahead, the real GDP growth is projected to be at 0.467 per cent in December 2024.

The data is updated yearly and is categorised in the Census and Economic Information Centre (CEIC) under World Trend Plus' Country Forecast.

Looking ahead,
Eswatini

government net
debt is projected
to stand at E55 071
billion in March
2024

Last	Previous	Min	Max	Unit	Frequency	Range
E55.071	E47.011	E0.743	E55.071	SZL billion	Yearly	1993 - 2024
2024	2023	1993	2024			Updated on 31 Oct 2019

We want cloak room - Vendors

BY BAHLE GAMA

VENDORS at the Mbabane Bus Rank are demanding cloak rooms for storing their stock/merchandise.

Speaking during interviews, the vendors expressed their distress at the lack of such a facility, making it difficult for them to safely store their stock which leads to damage and theft.

The vendors revealed that they were currently storing their stock at a cloak room within the bus rank belonging to one Mrs Dlamini which she uses during the day to make money by keeping customer's goods and parcels.

They further disclosed that they store their stock at the cloak room at a fee but when morning comes the owner throws their bags with the stock outside, irrespective of the weather patterns. "Sometimes it would be raining heavily and the cloak-room owner will throw out our things in the rain and they would be damaged," said one of the vendors. She further stated that they did not blame the cloak room owner's stance because her cloak room is meant to gen-

erate money for her as a businesswoman.

All the vendors stated that they had raised the issue with the Municipal Council of Mbabane and their plea was ignored.

"We spoke to the municipality about the need for a cloak room but we were not given an ear. We do not have the resources to carry our stock back and forth from where we reside, hence the need for a cloak room. When it rains, we really lose a lot as business people," another vendor said.

Arrangement

When reached for comment, Municipal Council of Mbabane Public and Information Officer Lucky Tsabedze said the vendors have an arrangement with council to keep their wares over night at the bus rank cloakroom. "Each vendor pays E100 monthly for storage at the cloak-room and an additional E20 for security to avoid break-ins," he said.

He further stated that there has been a request from the vendors for another storage space and council was actively looking into it.

Rains, earthworks delay completion of Manzini Trade Hub

STORIES BY BAHLE GAMA

...to be completed end of March

THE heavy rainfall experienced by the country and earthworks complications have delayed the completion of the Manzini Trade Hub.

The Trade Hub, which is funded by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), in partnership with the European Union to the tune of E9 million, was scheduled to be complete by December 31.

This was disclosed by Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo during an interview yesterday.

terday.

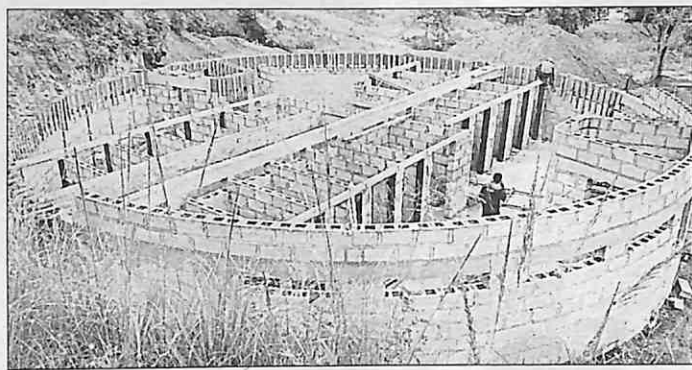
He said there were two setbacks which caused the delay in the completion of the Trade Hub.

"One of the setbacks was when we began earthworks we discovered that there was water under the surface which we had to fix and this led to us losing a month and a half of our set timeframe," he said. He further stated that the heavy rainfall also contributed to the delay, also causing damages resulting to a two to three

months delay.

"There were damages incurred due to the heavy rainfall and the setback was major, hence contributing to the delay of the completion of the hub," he said.

Khumalo also disclosed that despite the setbacks encountered, the project gave room for flexibility and would be complete by the end of March. It is anticipated that by then the hub would be in full use by the vendors as per the vision.



ALMOST: A side view of the Manzini Trade Hub that is under construction and will be completed in March. (Courtesy pic)



..Delays, damages will not affect budget - Minister

MINISTER of Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo says the damages incurred during the heavy rainfall will not affect the budget of the construction of the Manzini Trade Hub.

Khumalo said he had met with his team and upon reviewing everything, learnt that they were on track.

"Due to the delays and damages that occurred and required funds, we reviewed everything and noted that we are on track with the budget and expect the entire project to be complete entirely with the use of set funds," he said.

ABOUT THE TRADE HUB

The construction of the hub began

in July 2019 and is funded by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), in partnership with the European Union to the tune of E9 million.

Decent

The Trade Hub, also known as 'InhlanguaniselayaboMake' is an initiative aimed at providing a decent trading structure for informal traders currently using the Manzini Satellite Bus Rank.

It will also come with accommodation and ablution facilities for the vendors.

According to the ministry, the Trade Hub, therefore, is one way in which the ministry, with the support of Her

Majesty the Indlovukazi, hopes to empower women vendors in business.

The Trade Hub is also in line with the Government of Eswatini's Strategic Roadmap 2019-2022, whose vision is to sustainably grow the economy of Eswatini for the benefit of all who live in it.

Phase one of the Trade Hub will accommodate about 300 traders and 200 lodgers.

It also comes with a leather studio.

The project follows the signing of a financial agreement between COMESA and the Kingdom of Eswatini in March last year.



EXEMPLARY: Standard Bank Chief Executive Mvuselelo Fakudze being screened during a wellness open day. (Courtesy pics)

SWABCHA sensitises over 70 corporates on wellness

BY QONDILE NTIWANE

THE Swaziland Business Coalition on HIV and AIDS (SWABCHA) serviced over 70 corporates and parastatals with a broad range of services that covered wellness screening of various diseases.

These include HIV, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), glucose, cholesterol and many more other tests as well as training for wellness champions and focal persons.

Reflecting on the ended year, SWABCHA CEO Thobile Dlamini said 2019 was a relatively good year in all the four strategic focus areas, and that challenges continued to inspire them to do better and explore new ways of working smarter and reaching out to more private companies.

"SWABCHA has undergone many phases since its inception in 2001 as a desk in what is now Business Eswatini.

The periodic changes are in line with the strategy to enhance the service delivery to achieve the optimal goal of a 'Healthy Worker Healthy Business,' she said.

Dlamini highlighted seven achievements by the organisation in 2019, one of them being the screenings in 70 corporates and parastatals.

The CEO said these were member companies who either paid an annual membership fee or procure services on a pay as you go basis and that this bode well with the sustainability strategic objective of ensuring that at least 75 per cent of the funds to run the organisation should be sourced locally.

In addition, SWABCHA re-empha-

sised and reenergised the partnership between Business Eswatini, Eswatini Standards Authority (SWASA) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) which saw them securing funds to conduct a five day training course on the wellness and disease management standard SZNS SANS 16001: 2013.

"Other strong partnerships included the University Research Council (URC) for targeted HIV testing and linkage to care, Australian Embassy for breast and cervical cancer awareness," she said.

She highlighted on the relaunch of the sector's commitment to ending AIDS by 2023, an initiative launched by Standard Bank Chief Executive Mvuselelo Fakudze on December 6.

Mobilise

Fakudze, upon discovering that men were still reluctant to know their HIV status, decided to mobilise his peers for a public test under the World AIDS Day theme; 'Communities Make the Difference: private sector leading from the front.'

She said the campaign was a springboard for 2020 as all efforts would get their male counterparts know their status and those found to be positive start treatment. NERCHA would continue to be SWABCHA's strategic partner.

"We need to be more deliberate in the fight for wellness in the workplace.

We will put more resources behind this good course and make sure employees and families are ready for a future without life threatening diseases that can be managed. All the best to you all in 2020," she said.

FRANCE - Workers across France are striking as part of a national wave of industrial action, that has seen protests against reforms to the state pension system.

Train and bus drivers, air traffic controllers, energy workers, truck drivers, teachers, students, police officers, lawyers, judges and street cleaners are all threatening to stay off work for an indefinite period from December 5.

French rail transport is being hit hard, with 82 per cent of drivers on strike and at least 90 per cent of regional trains cancelled. In Paris, 11 out of 16 metro lines have shut

Why France striking over Macron's pension reforms

completely. In other sectors, 30 per cent of domestic flights have been cancelled and 70 per cent of primary teachers are on strike, which means around 40 per cent of schools are closed. Truck drivers planned to blockade roads and tollbooths.

The strikes are against government plans to remove 42 'special' pension schemes and switch to a universal points-based pension system for all workers, public and private. The finer details of the reforms are still unclear, but the direction points towards workers having to work for

longer, with less generous pensions when they retire. The reform would mean pensions are based on a career average rather than a final salary calculation, as it currently is. And workers would have to accumulate a number of points (based on time worked) in order to start taking their pension. Under current pension regimes, some workers such as train drivers can take their pension from the age of 52, which was originally seen as compensation for tough working conditions such as difficult hours and shift work. The changes

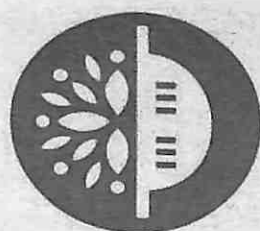
would mean a rise in the retirement age, currently to 62, and would end differential treatment.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

The strike has a relatively high level of public support. According to one opinion poll, 46 per cent support the strikes but other reports show 69 per cent backing. But polls also show that 76 per cent of French people are in favour of pension reforms. This is because the strike is more broadly viewed as protest action against the President, Emmanuel Macron and the government in gen-

eral. Over the last 15 years, France has introduced radical changes into its labour law, which has accelerated under Macron. He was elected in 2017 with a clear manifesto to reform, and put a halt to, the 'régimes spéciaux' (special employment schemes) that exist mainly in France's public sector, which has more advantageous employment rights than the private sector. In 2018, the government was able to push through reforms to change the protected status of railway workers. There was a showdown but the government won this battle.

The Conversation



OMBUDSMAN
OF FINANCIAL SERVICES
Umlamuli wetindzaba tetimali

OMBUDSDAY

**FREE
FAIR
FOR ALL**

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:

”

...When the Ombudsman receives a complaint, we work to settle a matter through a type of less formal discussion with the complainant and respondent called conciliation or facilitation

THE new year presents an opportunity for everyone to refresh their vision and reset their actions.

As the year 2020 takes off, consumers and service providers alike can reflect on their contribution towards the growth of the non-bank financial services industry. Knowing your rights and responsibilities is an important part of maintaining good business practice in this industry. With this said, disagreements between consumers and service providers may arise throughout the course of the year, and these may require stabilising by engaging a third party. As a dispute resolution body, the Ombudsman of Financial Services (Ombudsman) is committed to educating the public about the types of complaints we handle, as well as helping people understand the correct procedures for filing complaints.

Types of complaints

A central part of understanding your rights and responsibilities in relation to complaints in the non-bank financial services industry, is understanding the boundaries within which the Ombudsman operates. Below are a few points to remember:

1. The Ombudsman receives, investigates and makes decisions on complaints against non-bank financial services providers (FSPs) that are licensed by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA). Therefore, before you sign on the dotted line and commit yourself or your money to financial transactions this year, make sure that you are dealing with a licensed entity. If you would like more information about the legitimacy of a non-bank FSP, contact FSRA at 2406 8000.

2. The types of complaints that the Ombudsman handles are: retirement (pension and provident) fund complaints; long and short term insurance complaints; savings and credit cooperatives, building societies, retail credit, credit bureaus, pawn brokers and/or hire purchase complaints; medical cover complaints and investments or securities complaints.

Therefore, knowing the financial industry that you operate in may also help you appreciate the different structures that have been put in place to uphold good industry practice, such as the Ombudsman of Financial Services.

Understanding rights and responsibilities in the dispute resolution process

When the Ombudsman receives a complaint, the resolution process thereafter involves a com-

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES



plainant and a respondent. A complainant is a trustee, legal or personal individual who lodges a complaint at the Ombudsman's office. The respondent is the licensed non-bank FSP that is being complained against.

The following are rights and responsibilities to take note of in the interest of the complainant, respondent and the Ombudsman:

- A complainant must first submit a written complaint to the FSP that they are unhappy with them, giving them 30 days to resolve the matter. If there is no response after 30 days or the complainant is not satisfied with the response, then they can complete and submit a sworn-to complaint form to the Ombudsman, attaching all relevant supporting documents.

- When the Ombudsman receives a complaint, we work to settle a matter through a type of less formal discussion with the complainant and respondent, called conciliation or facilitation. Where settlement is not possible, officers at the Ombudsman then proceed with investigating the complaint by requesting the respondent to answer to the complaint in writing.

- After receiving the request for response letter, the respondent is required to submit a sworn-to response to the Ombudsman and send the

complainant a copy of the response.

- The complainant must then submit a sworn-to reply or confirmation that they don't have anything to say to the response by the respondent, and this must be copied to the respondent.

- At this point, the Ombudsman is open to considering another form of dispute resolution called mediation. If mediation is unsuccessful, then a decision or determination – similar to a court judgement – is made on the matter.

Free, Fair For all. - United Nations World Braille Day

As a public service, we resolve disputes between complainants and respondents free of charge throughout the process. We also handle complaints without taking sides and only consider what is fair and reasonable in each case, respecting and protecting all the information that we receive. In addition to making the public aware that our services are free and fair, we also aim to emphasise that we resolve disputes for all consumers of non-bank financial services in Eswatini.

On the 4th of January 2020, the United Nations observed World Braille Day to "raise awareness of the importance of braille as a means of

communication in the full realisation of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people," (United Nations 2020). We would like to take the opportunity to remind all our valued clients that our complaint forms are available in Braille in both SiSwati and English. If you are reading this and you have a family member or friend who is visually impaired who would like to lodge a complaint against a licensed non-bank FSP, please share this information with them. Let us all exercise our rights and observe our responsibilities in 2020 and beyond as we strive to strengthen our economy.

N.B Ombudsday is a monthly consumer education column compiled by the office of the Ombudsman of Financial Services in the country. Kindly note that our office will be temporarily closed until tomorrow. Wishing you a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

For more information, contact the office of the Ombudsman at:

3rd Floor, West Wing,
Ingcamu, (PSPF) Building, Mhlambanyatsi
Road, Mbabane.

Tel: +268 24047653 / 2404 4464

Website: www.ombudsfs.org.sz

Facebook: Ombudsman of Financial Services



LOUIS VUITTON TO CLOSE HONG KONG SHOP AS PROTESTS BITE

INTERNATIONAL – Louis Vuitton, the world's biggest luxury goods brand by sales, is preparing to shut one of its shops in Hong Kong where protests have hit demand as high rental costs bite, the South China Morning Post newspaper reported.

The handbag firm plans to close its store in the Times Square mall, the paper said, citing sources close to the matter. The company says on its website it has eight shops in Hong Kong.

The newspaper said the decision to close the shop came after the company failed to reach an agreement with its landlord to cut the rent in the mall outlet.

Wharf Holdings, the shopping center's owner and Vuitton did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Vuitton's parent group LVMH, the Paris-based conglomerate behind other fashion brands like Christian Dior and Hennessy cognac, declined to comment.

High-end fashion labels have hunkered down in Hong Kong since anti-government demonstrations escalated in June, hoping the turmoil would ease in one of the world's top shopping destinations.

Until now, the luxury brands had only shut stores in Hong Kong temporarily when protests flared. Hong Kong has long drawn numerous tourists from the Chinese mainland who pick up luxury cosmetics, accessories and clothing at slightly lower prices than at home.

But as the protests dragged on, tourist arrivals have slumped and losses began to trickle through to third-quarter earnings.

Hong Kong's retail sales fell 23.6 per cent from a year earlier in November to HK\$30 billion (\$3.85 billion), government data showed on Friday, in the tenth consecutive month of declines. The protests have spilled into 2020, with some 400 people arrested in New Year's Day demonstrations when a pro-democracy

march descended into chaos.

Some brands are weighing up redirecting some of their investments elsewhere, including to the Chinese mainland and other parts of Asia where many have managed to make up for lost sales in Hong Kong.

Executives at LVMH and its rivals like puffer jacket maker Moncler or Gucci-owner Kering have said they were trying to renegotiate notoriously high rents in Hong Kong as one way of mitigating the hit to operating margins.

But the brands are likely to have to contemplate a larger retreat from Hong Kong in the longer term, where some have too many shops, consultancy Bain said in November.

HSBC will suspend overnight services at 19 ATM clusters in Hong Kong on weekends and public holidays, the bank said on Friday, two days after its branches and ATMs were targeted during protests.

Reuters

As South African investors eye 2020, budget looms large

JOHANNESBURG – South Africa's Budget, due to be presented next month, is looming as a key first-quarter event for investors seeking insights on the outlook for a stock market that failed to keep pace with emerging-market peers last year.

Johannesburg's benchmark index was held back in 2019 by the dismal performance of the local economy, which is at risk of slipping into recession. The FTSE/JSE Africa All Share Index climbed 8.2 per cent, well short of the 15 per cent gain in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

Finance Minister Tito Mboweni's February Budget speech will be scrutinised for evidence that South Africa is doing enough to preserve its last remaining investment grade rating from Moody's Investors Service.

Debt

In November, the ratings company changed its outlook on the nation's assessment to negative and said it wants to see a "credible fiscal strategy to contain the rise in debt" in the Budget.

Traders will also examine any plans to manage crippling debts at the state-owned power

utility, which is struggling to maintain steady electricity supplies, and the loss-making national airline.

"The budget is the next big thing," said Peter Takaendes, a money manager at Mergence Investment Managers in Cape Town. Sentiment could be boosted by "any credible effort to show that the government is willing to avoid a downgrade and is ready to present a concrete path to reducing government debt with achievable targets," he said.

News24

FNB's partnership with ENTERTAINER app renewed

DURBAN – FNB has announced that its partnership with the ENTERTAINER has been renewed for another year.

This will give customers access to two-for-one discounted offers at various restaurants, beauty salons, health and fitness facilities as well as hotels for the duration of 2020. The ENTERTAINER app users usually pay an annual fee to access discounted offers across South Africa's major cities – Durban, Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria. FNB and RMB Private Bank customers will once again reap these benefits at no cost, saving them a total of R1 580 between 2 January and 30 December 2020. This proposition is also available to FNB Business customers who have access to Online Banking for Business. Johan Moolman, Chief Executive of eBucks Rewards said, "More than 250 000 customers have registered for this value-added service. It only makes sense that we renew the partnership to provide even more customers with meaningful value which helps them with money management beyond their day-to-day banking needs. This is another way our customers can stretch their wallets during these tough economic times". The ENTERTAINER recently launched its 2020 offering which includes new merchants across major cities in South Africa.

"We are adding more than 480 new merchants on the app in 2020, and we are very excited that that FNB and RMB Private Bank customers will get to experience these great deals for another year. We would like to encourage customers who haven't signed up to join the thousands who save their hard-earned cash and enjoy good entertainment at discounted prices," said Jaegar Torrente, Head of Corporate Partnerships for the ENTERTAINER in South Africa. FNB said that customers who have registered for the service in 2019 will be automatically renewed from 2 January until 30 December 2020. New customers will need to follow these steps to register:

1. Log in to the FNB/RMB Private Bank App on their smartphone
2. Select the ENTERTAINER app icon under eBucks Rewards and follow the prompts to register.

You need to be an eBucks Rewards member and have the latest version of the FNB app to access and start using the app. Customers will then receive a welcome email from the ENTERTAINER along with login details within 24 hours. The ENTERTAINER app can be downloaded from the Google Play store or Apple app store.

For a customer to view their free subscription once they have successfully logged in they must follow these steps:

1. Select My profile
2. Select Preference
3. Select My Products under My History

Business report online



Super-rich vacations: Almost R1 million for 4-night stay in Cape Town

CAPE TOWN – Super-rich visitors to Cape Town over the holiday season have once again been willing to dig deep into their pockets for luxury rental accommodation.

The Dogon Group says it secured a single holiday rental of just under R1m for a four-night stay on the Atlantic Seaboard.

The agency also made a short-term rental deal of R220 000 per month for a house in Bantry Bay. In the suburb of Constantia it concluded a lease of R450 000 per month on a security estate.

Janine Sullivan, Pam Golding Properties rental agent (holiday and long-term rentals) for Camps Bay, says the most expensive properties are the 'villa hotel' style

accommodation that come with a chef who prepares all meals, a butler service, a property manager, a daily cleaning service and a snack bar. She says the least expensive rental in this area is R2 500 a night and rentals go up to R180 000 a night. Pieter Brundyn, founder and CEO of premium lifestyle management company In Residence, says pricing in its portfolio ranges from R20 000 to R250 000 per night. "We focus on contemporary architecture, beautiful interiors, fine art, adding our local knowledge to deliver on a peaceful holiday for the guest," he tells Fin24. "It seems after (last year's) 'water' crisis, the high-end travellers are coming back. We mostly have American, European and African nationalities staying with us this year." News24



Focus on

SA Scene

Your Daily Mzansi News

GOVERNMENT TIGHTENS GRIP ON REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS

JOHANNESBURG - Home affairs Minister Aaron Motsoaledi has gazetted tough new regulations to control the movements and activities of refugees and asylum seekers, including a ban on political activity and immediate detention on grounds of national security.

The regulations under the Refugees Act, which took effect from January 1, stipulate that "no refugee or asylum seeker may participate in any political activity or campaign in furtherance of any political party or political interests in the Republic".

The refugee status of any person who engages in such activity can be withdrawn by the standing committee for refugee affairs, and they will be dealt with as an illegal foreigner in terms of the Immigration Act, reported

BusinessLIVE. Under the act, a refugee or asylum seeker can be removed from the republic on grounds that they pose a threat to national security. The regulations allow for their immediate detention under these circumstances.

The past week has seen violent clashes between rival groups of refugees camped on Cape Town's Greenmarket Square and in the nearby Central Methodist Mission. The group, which has split into factions, is demanding relocation to a safer country.

The regulations also make it more difficult for refugees and asylum seekers to enter SA in the first place, requiring, among other things, that they present a valid asylum transit visa from the country through which they travelled at the port of entry. They will also need to provide valid identification and submit

biometric data.

All applications for asylum will have to be accompanied by a transit visa or, in certain circumstances, a valid visa issued in terms of the Immigration Act. The asylum seeker visa will contain the conditions under which the asylum seeker will be able to temporarily reside in SA, seek employment and obtain basic education. "Prior to issuing any right to seek employment to an asylum seeker, an assessment must be completed to establish such person's ability to sustain himself or herself and any dependents," the regulations say.

Refugee status can also be terminated if a refugee has 'reavailed' themselves of the protection of the country of origin, such as by seeking consular services at any diplomatic mission representing the country of origin. *iol*

12 SANDF members accused of stealing weapons released

PRETORIA - Twelve people linked to the theft of 19 R4 assault rifles from the South African Defence Force's (SANDF) Tek Base in Lyttelton have been released from custody, according to the SABC.

The 12 SANDF members were released on Friday pending further investigation into the case, the public broadcaster reported over the weekend.

SANDF National Communications head Siphiwe Dlamini told the SABC that the accused were released from custody, rather than on bail, due to internal military court processes.

They were expected to appear at the military court again on March 10.

News24

Decisive action needed against overloading taxis

PORT ELIZABETH - Following the deaths of seven people in a minibus accident on the R102, the IFP on Friday in a statement has called on the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) MEC for transport Bheki Ntuli to address overloading it says is prevalent in the taxi industry.

The IFP said that the taxi, in which fifteen others were also injured, was overloaded when it rolled down an embankment, and called for the immediate arrest of the driver.

"This overloading has undoubtedly contributed to the accident and needs to be addressed as overloading is a contributory factor that leads to the alarmingly high number of fatalities on our province's roads."



The party said the dangerous practice placed the lives of road users at risk and that the department of transport's inability to 'enforce the rule of law' emboldened the taxi industry to assume it is above the law.

"Campaigns have clearly failed to highlight the dangers of overloading. Passengers themselves are complacent and are willfully jeopardising their own safety. It is time to adopt a tough stance against taxi drivers and conductors who encourage overloading and other dangerous practices. "We believe that drivers involved in overloading must be charged with manslaughter. Lives are placed at risk by those greedy taxi bosses and drivers who put money before the safety of passengers. *News24*



DIFIANT: KwaZulu-Natal whistle-blower Thabiso Zulu.

KZN municipal graft whistle-blower 'defiant in face of death'

DURBAN - KwaZulu-Natal whistle-blower Thabiso Zulu says he has fought back thoughts of leaving to seek asylum in another country and remains 'defiant in the face of death'.

"I have abandoned it because it will be cowardice of the highest order to flee from the battlefield. The war against corruption must continue, no matter the price one has to pay," Zulu said. "I remain defiant in the face of death."

Zulu is entering a third year in his fight to obtain the state's protection for exposing corruption.

In 2017, he testified in the Moerane Commission on alleged corruption at the Umzimkhulu Municipality, including the refurbishment of the town's Memorial Hall, which was linked to the 2017 death of his friend and former ANC Youth League Secretary General Sindiso Magaqa.

Although threat assessments had been done by law enforcement

agencies, he has yet to receive state protection in line with recommendations that were made.

Last October, Zulu escaped with a bullet wound to his hand when he was attacked in Pietermaritzburg.

The incident, Zulu says, led to him receiving a phone call from President Cyril Ramaphosa who promised him protection would be urgently granted. He claimed there has been no further contact from Ramaphosa nor his office regarding his safety.

He revealed there was a process initiated by the ANC KZN Provincial Chairperson and Premier Sihle Zikalala to find a solution to his plight.

"That process is led by the KZN ANC PEC head of security, peace and stability Bheki Ntuli who is also MEC of Transport, Community Safety and Liaison. Though slow, there is hope in this process."

Political Bureau

MKHWEBANE HOPING FOR POSITIVE COURT OUTCOMES IN 2020

JOHANNESBURG - Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane is going into the new year hoping for positive court outcomes after a bruising 2019.

Mkhwebane's office came under scrutiny last year with increasing calls for her to step down.

She was accused of playing politics as several judges questioned her credibility, competence and understanding of her constitutional duties. "Vague, contradictory, nonsensical, irrational, unconstitutional" are but a few ways several judges have described some of the Mkhwebane's reports.

Some have even gone further, ruling that she lied under oath, acted in bad faith, showed bias, was dishonest and lacked understanding of her constitutional duties.

She lost a number of key court cases - including against Pravin Gordhan and President Cyril

Ramaphosa which successfully interdicted her remedial actions.

Even some of her high profile reports were set aside, like her findings into the Vrede Dairy Farm and the South African Reserve Bank.

The Constitutional Court also found

Mkhwebane personally liable for 15 per cent of the Reserve Bank's legal fees, while the North Gauteng High Court ordered her to pay out of her own pocket for her failure to investigate the role of former Free State Premier Ace Magashule in the Estina Dairy Farm project.

In an exclusive interview with Eyewitness News, Mkhwebane said there was a concerted attack against her. But, she said she's not going anywhere.

EWN

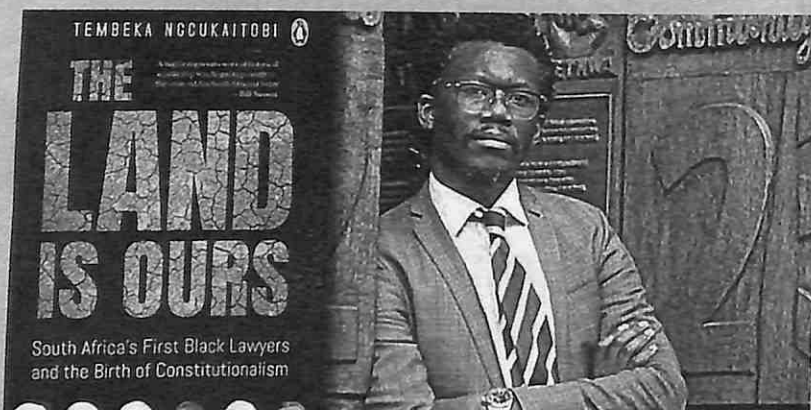
'The Land is Ours' voted book of the year

JOHANNESBURG - Shivambu didn't miss an opportunity to lash out at 'Stratcom' and what he calls SA's media 'cabal' in the process of congratulating the advocate for his achievement.

Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi's book 'The Land is Ours' has been voted the Book of the Year for 2019 by followers of Read a Book SA.

The prominent lawyer's achievement led to a message of congratulation from Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Deputy President Floyd Shivambu, and Ngcukaitobi's own tweet acknowledging the accolade could be found retweeted on EFF leader Julius Malema's timeline too. Shivambu's message didn't only congratulate Ngcukaitobi but also took the opportunity to slate 'Stratcom' and the 'cabal'.

'Stratcom' was an apartheid-era unit which spread disinformation and influ-



enced the media, with the EFF second-in-command using the term to refer to modern SA media as a whole. He also often speaks about a 'media cabal' which he believes exists in South Africa.

"Well done Advocate [Ngcukaitobi] for publishing #BookOfTheYear! At least readers know books not the compilation of newspaper articles STRAT-

COM and the CABAL launched 'books'. You've contributed to the geography of knowledge, and should continue to do so. We are proud!" he tweeted.

'The Land is Ours' tells the story of South Africa's first black lawyers, who operated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and tracks 'the birth of constitutionalism in South Africa'.

The Citizen



IRAN ARMY COMMANDER KILLING

ROUHANI ISSUES CHILLING WARNING TO USA

...Iran's President says US made a 'grave mistake' and will face the consequences 'for years to come' after Soleimani's family asks for revenge

BAGHDAD - The President of Iran has issued a chilling warning that the US made a 'grave mistake' by killing the leader of Iran's Quds force, Qassem Soleimani, in an airstrike and that it will face consequences for years to come.

In a visit to the notorious general's house on Saturday, one of Soleimani's daughter's asked President Hassan Rouhani for revenge.

"Who is going to avenge my father's blood?" she asked.

In response, he promised her that 'everyone will take revenge and "we will, we will avenge his blood, you don't worry."

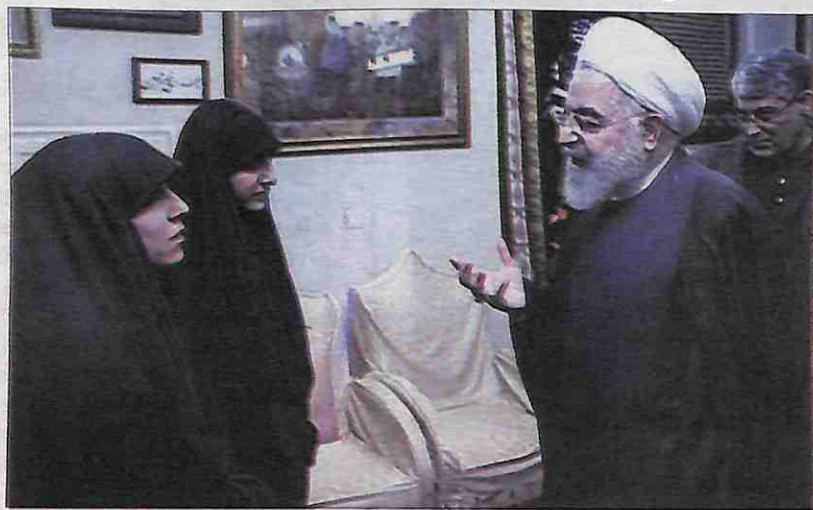
"The Americans did not realise what a grave mistake they have made. They will suffer the consequences of such criminal measure not only today, but also throughout the years to come," Rouhani said.

"This crime committed by the US will go down in history as one of their unforgettable crimes against the Iranian nation."

Soleimani, 62, was killed in the early hours of Friday, local time, outside Baghdad's International Airport in an airstrike ordered by President Donald Trump.

Hours after the attack, Trump said he ordered the killing of Soleimani to prevent war, adding that the commander was plotting 'imminent and sinister' attacks against Americans.

The general was the architect of Iran's shadow warfare and military expansion in the Middle East and was targeted specifically because he was actively developing plans to kill members of the



WE WILL REVENGE: President Rouhani (right) speaking to General Soleimani's daughters (left) on Saturday. (Daily Mail)

US military and diplomats in the region. "We took action last night to stop a war. We did not take action to start a war," the president said in brief remarks at Mar-a-Lago on Friday.

Rouhani has said that Iran has the right to seek revenge, saying that retaliation will come when the 'dirty hands of the US' are removed from the region indefinitely.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei also visited the home on Friday evening where he said the airstrike that killed the architect of the country's infamous militia was 'villainous'.

"Everyone is bereaved and grateful to your father. This gratitude is due to his great sincerity, since hearts are in God's hands. Without sincerity, [people's] hearts wouldn't have been with him like this. May God bestow His blessings on

all of us," he said, recounting the conversation in a tweet.

"You saw people in many cities come out in numbers, with devotion. Wait to see his funeral. These blessings are before us to see the value of martyrdom. What a blessing for Hajj Qasem. He achieved his dream."

In a series of other tweets following the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the Trump administration as 'villainous' and condemned the airstrike.

"Hajj Qasem Soleimani had been exposed to martyrdom repeatedly, but in performing his duty and fighting for the cause of God, he didn't fear anyone or anything. He was martyred by the most villainous people, the US govt, their pride in this crime is a distinguishing feature of him," he wrote on Saturday.

Daily Mail

'Iranian hackers' breach US government website

TEHRAN - A website operated by the US government has been hacked by a group claiming to represent the government of Iran.

The website operated by the little-known Federal Depository Library Programme, fdlp.gov, was hacked and defaced on Saturday, and has been taken offline.

A message from the hackers left on the website read: "in the name of god. >>>>> Hacked By Iran Cyber Security Group Hackers ... ;)<<<<< This is only small part of Iran's cyber ability ! We're always ready."

The FDLP is a programme created to make federal government publications available to the public at no cost.

It followed the similar hacking of websites for a number of obscure, non-governmental entities, including the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, the Taiwan Lung Meng Technology Company, and the Human Rights Protection Association of India.

The website for a British company called Bigways was also struck in the cyber attacks.

Security experts have already warned that cyber attacks could be part of Iran's retaliation for the US airstrike on Friday that killed Revolutionary Guard General

Qassem Soleimani, a top official in Iran and beloved there.

Iran's state-backed hackers are already among the world's most aggressive and could inject malware that triggers major disruptions to the US public and private sector.

Potential targets include manufacturing facilities, oil and gas plants and transit systems. A top US cybersecurity official is warning businesses and government agencies to be extra vigilant.

In 2012 and 2013, in response to US sanctions, Iranian state-backed hackers carried out a series of disruptive denial-of-service attacks that knocked offline the websites of major US banks including Bank of America as well as the New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ.

Two years later, they wiped servers at the Sands Casino in Las Vegas, crippling hotel and gambling operations.

The destructive attacks on US targets ebbed when Tehran reached a nuclear deal with the Obama administration in 2015.

The killing early Friday in Iraq of Quds Force commander Soleimani - long after Trump scrapped the nuclear deal - completely alters the equation. *Daily Mail*



ANGRY: Demonstrators burn US and British flags during a protest against the killing of Qassem Soleimani, head of the elite Quds Force. (Reuters)

White House formally notified Congress of airstrike

WASHINGTON - The White House transmitted on Saturday its formal notification to Congress of the US drone strike ordered by President Donald Trump that killed Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani in Iraq, two senior congressional aides said.

The notification is classified and likely describes Trump's justification for the attack that killed the high-level Iranian official, who was considered second in power only to the Ayatollah.

Many congressional Democrats have criticised Trump for failing to seek advance approval or notify Congress of the attack, which has caused a dramatic rise in tensions between Iran and the United States and its allies.

The notification was sent under a 1973

US law called the War Powers Act, which requires the administration to notify Congress within 48 hours of committing armed forces to military action or imminent actions.

Trump's administration was expected to explain the circumstances, the authority under which the action was taken and the expected scope and duration of the military involvement. The White House did not immediately comment. The version submitted to Congress is classified and it is not clear if the White House will release an unclassified version, according to one of the aides, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Daily Mail

'52 sites to be targeted if Iran retaliates over Soleimani'

WASHINGTON - US President Donald Trump has threatened to hit 52 Iranian sites 'very hard' if Iran attacked Americans or American assets following a US raid on Friday that killed the head of the Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani, and an Iraqi militia leader.

Showing no sign of an effort to ease tensions in the region, Trump took to Twitter to warn that the US had "targeted 52 Iranian sites" and that some were "at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD." The 52 targets represented the 52 Americans who were held hostage in Iran for 444 days after being seized at the US embassy in Tehran in November



Donald J. Trump

@realDonaldTrump

Iran is talking very boldly about targeting certain USA assets as revenge for our ridding the world of their terrorist leader who had just killed an American, & badly wounded many others, not to mention all of the people he had killed over his lifetime, including recently...

200K 12:52 AM - Jan 5, 2020

73.2K people are talking about this

1979, he added. Tensions have escalated since Friday, when the US killed Iranian commander Soleimani and top Iraqi paramilitary chief Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in a drone attack on their convoy as it drove out of Baghdad's international airport. Several rockets fell in and around Baghdad on Saturday night, includ-

ing inside the capital's heavily-fortified Green Zone and the Balad airbase housing US troops. No casualties were reported in the rocket attacks, which were confirmed by US military spokesman, Colonel Myles B Caggins III. He said no troops had been injured but Iraqi civilians could have been harmed. *Al Jazeera*

Focus on World News

Global News

HOTTEST PLACE ON EARTH:

DEVASTATING BUSHFIRES SWEEP ACROSS AUSTRALIA

CANBERRA - The devastating wildfires sweeping across Australia could force some of the country's best-loved animals to the brink of extinction, scientists warn.

Almost half a billion creatures are estimated to have died in blazes that have now engulfed 12 million acres - an area nearly two thirds the size of the island of Ireland.

And the crisis shows no sign of abating. The Penrith suburb of Sydney was the hottest place on Earth on Saturday as temperatures soared to 48.9C (120F). Elsewhere in New South Wales, 80mph winds fanned the flames, with thousands of people fleeing their homes to take shelter on beaches.

On Kangaroo Island, a wildlife paradise in southern Australia, two people and hundreds of koalas are feared dead. The human death toll stands at 23 since the fires began in September, and more than 1 500 homes have been destroyed.

Wildlife experts estimate at least 8 000 koalas have perished, almost a third of the entire population in New South Wales. Ecologists say the animals may disappear from some regions and have to be reclassified as an endangered species. On a beach at Bastion Point in Victoria, where thousands of people were taken by boat, locals reported seeing hundreds of dead birds on the sand, including kookaburras. Scientists fear that the destruc-



tion of nesting grounds and forests could have long-term implications for the populations of many species of birds. Another creature under threat is the potoroo, a hare-size wallaby - its habitat in New South Wales' Ngunya Jargoon forest has been destroyed.

Concern

There is also mounting concern for the endangered Australasian bittern, a large heron, due to the widespread destruction of the Macquarie Marshes, a wetland in north-western New South Wales. The state has declared a week-long state of emergency, with tens of

thousands told to evacuate coastal areas. In the north-eastern state of Queensland, experts said the silver-headed antechinus, an endangered marsupial carnivore, was threatened with extinction. New South Wales Transport Minister Andrew Constance compared the blazes to an 'atomic bomb'. "It's indescribable the hell it's caused," Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced an extra 3 000 defence force reservists were being drafted in to fight the fires. Meanwhile, there are fears that several large blazes could coalesce to form firestorms. **DPA**

URGED:
British prime
Minister
Boris
Johnson.

Johnson urged to kick-off parallel post-Brexit trade talks

LONDON - Boris Johnson is being urged by senior Tories to kick-off parallel post-Brexit trade talks with the US in order to put pressure on the EU and stop the bloc 'dragging its feet' over striking an agreement.

The UK is due to split from Brussels on January 31 but there will then be a so-called transition period until the end of the year when the two sides will try to hammer out the terms of a future relationship.

However, Brexiteers fear the EU could delay the talks in order to force an extension to the transition period so that the UK would have to make more budget contributions to the bloc.

Johnson has repeatedly ruled out any further delay but some Tories believe the prospect of a US trade deal could force the EU's hand and act as an incentive to hold speedy talks.

However, the prime minister's Cabinet is reportedly split on whether

to use US talks as negotiating leverage.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and International Trade Secretary Liz Truss are both apparently keen to begin talks with the White House as soon as possible.

But according to the Sunday Times, other ministers believe it is 'unrealistic' to believe the tactics would sway Brussels.

Johnson is due to meet the new European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in Downing Street on Wednesday.

He is expected to set out to Jean-Claude Juncker's replacement his preferred timetable for trade talks amid concerns the EU was able to dictate terms during initial discussions over the UK's divorce.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith, former Tory Cabinet minister and a senior Brexiteer, suggested the US trade talks strategy would help speed up discussions with the EU.

Daily Mail

Poachers slaughter pride of 10 lions

JOHANNESBURG - At least 16 lions have been killed by poachers who hacked the faces and paws off eight of the adults to sell their teeth and claws to be used to turn into black magic potions.

Distraught Gert Blom, 51, who owns Predators Rock Bush Lodge in Rustenburg, South Africa, was surprised when he woke up not to hear his lion pride roaring as usual at dawn.

He went down to their enclosure and found his two male lions and six lionesses missing and followed drag trails to behind a perimeter wall where he found them all butchered.

Gert said: "They had hacked off 32 paws for the claws and eight of their snouts for their teeth after killing them with poisoned chicken, which is a really agonising death for the lions".

Daily Mail

APPLE CEO TIM COOK TAKES PAY CUT FOR 2019

NEW YORK - Apple CEO Tim Cook took a pay cut last year, but still took home a cool US\$125 million, it has been revealed.

Cook received US\$3 million in salary for 2019, the same as the prior year, while his bonus decreased to US\$7.67 million from US\$12 million, according to an SEC filing on Friday. His total compensation was US\$125 million last year, down from

US\$136 million in 2018.

The vast majority of Cook's compensation in both years came from the vesting of Apple stock awards.

Last month, Cook defended monopolies in business, saying it is not a problem as long as their position is not abused. He also said whether firms are overstepping the mark should be decided by regulators and not CEOs. However, he denied that Apple

had a monopoly in any sector, despite accusations to the contrary from app developers.

In July, it was announced the Department of Justice had opened a sweeping antitrust investigation of big technology companies to look at whether their online platforms have hurt competition, suppressed innovation or otherwise harmed consumers. **Daily Mail**

BRIEFS

Six dead after car plows into tourists

ROME - A car ploughed into a group of young German tourists in northern Italy early yesterday, killing six people and injuring 11, Italian fire officials said.

The deadly crash occurred in Luttach, near Bolzano in the Alto Adige region, shortly after 1 am as the Germans were gathering to board their bus. The Luttach volunteer fire service said in a Facebook post that the six dead were killed at the scene. The injured were taken to several nearby hospitals. Sky TG24 quoted Italian carabinieri as saying the driver was believed to be from the area and had a high alcohol blood content.

AP

Great White shark kills man

CANBERRA - A diver has been killed in a shark attack at Esperance in Western Australia but the authorities have not been able to locate his body. The attack by a white shark took place near Cull Island's West Beach just off Esperance coast yesterday afternoon, according to Surf Life Saving Western Australia.

The area is understood to be a popular diving spot to hunt for abalone among the locals.

The victim was in the area on a boat and diving at the moment of the attack, Western Australia police said.

DPA

Pence's linkage to 9/11 hijackers challenged

NEW YORK - An assertion by US Vice-President Mike Pence that Iranian commander Qasem Soleimani, who died on Friday in an American attack in Iraq, had helped the September 11 terrorists has been sharply challenged in the US press. In a Twitter message on Friday, Pence said that Soleimani "assisted in the clandestine travel to Afghanistan of 10 of the 12 terrorists who carried out the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States." When critics noted that the 2001 terror attacks were carried out by 19 militants, and not 12, Pence spokeswoman Katie Waldman specified that Pence was referring only to the dozen who had 'transited through Afghanistan.' **Al Jazeera**

Death toll tops 380 000 in nine-year war

DOHA - Almost nine years of civil war in Syria has left more than 380 000 people dead, including over 115 000 civilians, a war monitor said in a new toll on Saturday. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which has a network of sources across the country, said they included around 22 000 children and more than 13 000 women. The conflict flared after unprecedented anti-government protests in the southern city of Daraa on March 15, 2011. Demonstrations spread across Syria and were brutally suppressed by the regime, triggering a multi-front armed conflict that has drawn in jihadists and foreign powers.

AFP

Focus on Africa News

Continental News

LESOTHO DIPLOMATS RUN ILLEGAL ALCOHOL RING IN SA

JOHANNESBURG - Eyewitness News has uncovered a duty-free alcohol ring run by Lesotho diplomats in South Africa who say they are making up for the shortages in their salaries.

What started as an Eyewitness News investigation into the government of Lesotho's inability to pay expenses for staff resulted in the discovery of various fraudulent activities. The country's Consul General in Johannesburg Majoro Mohapi spilled the beans after City Power cut off the electricity supply to his home in Sandhurst. Mohapi said he spent Christmas without electricity after City Power cut it off because he owed more than R100 000 and had been reconnected illegally.

"I was ill advised by my staff that sometimes the bills were not paid and so it piled up until City Power cut it off and my staff reconnected it."

Mohapi said he and other colleagues



BOOZE: Some of the duty-free alcohol sold by Lesotho diplomats in South Africa.

often spent their own money to cover expenses such as petrol and cellphones to do their work – but some had resorted to selling alcohol that they bought duty-free. He said it was knowledge that his colleagues sold duty-free alcohol and even took it across the border. "I would say 90 per cent of my staff are doing that and they are mak-

ing profits out of it. To me it's an illegal business because they are defrauding the South African revenue authority of tax." Diplomats are allowed to pass borders without declaring goods and Mohapi said some of them used this privilege to export to bars and restaurants in Lesotho.

IOL

Grace Mugabe's flagship schools collapses, teachers, parents boltout

HARARE - Former First Lady Grace Mugabe's business empire continues to crumble after reports of the mass exodus of students, teachers and parents from her flagship schools citing a wide array of problems from ill-treatment to poor working conditions emerged.

Since the removal from power and subsequent death of Robert Mugabe, things have unravelled quite fast for the Grace Mugabe Foundation, which runs the schools, children's home and other projects.

Leaked documents that Zimbabwe Voice obtained from disgruntled teachers at the Amai Grace Mugabe Junior School in Mazowe show that authorities have had to terminate contracts of the few remaining teaching and other support staff citing "subdued business performance and closure of other projects" such as the former First Family's poultry projects in Kutama which used to feed revenue into the schools.

However, a source at the Grace Mugabe Foundation, which wrote the termination letters, told Zimbabwe

Voice that the schools were benefiting from the Government Ministers who used to be ambushed to provide teachers and other resources to the schools through threats when Robert Mugabe was still in power.

It also emerged that even as some teachers are being fired, the Amai Grace Mugabe school was also recruiting teachers and students.

A cook at the school also highlighted the plight of staff and students.

"We actually engaged in a strike towards the end of third term last year after we were told there wouldn't be any bonuses. It affected the food timetable and kids had their early morning porridge towards lunchtime," she said.

The cooking staff have also not been left out of the firing range. They received the same letters as the teachers.

"For and on behalf of the Executive Director (Grace Mugabe), I write to inform you of your employment termination with effect from 31 December 2019...", a letter shown to Zimbabwe Voice by an affected teacher reads in part. **News24**

'No need for us to maintain presence in SA'

JOHANNESBURG - Lesotho's Consular General to Johannesburg, Majoro Mohapi, was said he sees no need for the kingdom to maintain its presence in South Africa because, with no resources, it serves no purpose.

The chief diplomat told Eyewitness News that his office is failing to pay for expenses and he had to illegally reconnect his electricity when it was disconnected for non-payment.

He also said his other colleagues buy alcohol from duty-free stores and sell it in South Africa and in Lesotho to cover their expenses.

Mohapi admits many Lesotho diplomats are appointed purely for political loyalty, but he denies that his decision to spill the beans is to undermine his government.

"We have to speak out so that people we are serving shouldn't say we don't want to serve them. They should know the reality and know that we are willing to help them."

Mohapi said his staff are now idle and the mission is no longer serving its purpose. "It's degrading our mission, it is defeating the purpose of us being here. It is an insult to send someone and deprive them resources."

News24

AL-SHABAB ATTACKS MILITARY BASE IN KENYA

KENYA - Al-Shabab fighters have attacked a military base in Kenya's Lamu County used by US and Kenyan military personnel, the East African country's army and the armed group said.

Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF) said in a statement yesterday that "at around 5:30am an attempt was made to breach security at Manda Air Strip."

The attempted breach was successfully repulsed. Four terrorists' bodies have so far been found. The airstrip is safe," the statement added.

The US military command for Africa, AFRICOM, confirmed there had been an attack in a brief statement.

"US Africa Command acknowledges there was an attack at Manda Bay Airfield, Kenya and is monitoring the situation. Al-Shabab has claimed responsibility for the incident. As facts and details emerge, we will provide an update."

Earlier, al-Shabab said in a statement

the raid resulted in "severe casualties on both American and Kenyan troops stationed there."

"The Mujahideen fighters covertly entered enemy lines, successfully stormed the heavily fortified military base and have now taken effective control of a part of the base," the armed group said.

The attack sent a dark plume of smoke into the air, Abdallah Barghash, a witness, told Reuters news agency.

Tourist

Barghash was among the crowds watching the drama unfold on Manda Island from neighbouring Lamu Island, a top tourist destination.

Al Jazeera's Haru Mutase, reporting from Kenyan capital, Nairobi said it was an audacious attack by the armed group.

"The base is heavily fortified and al-Shabab still managed to break through. We are told the actual attack is over and that Kenyan and American forces are combing through the area trying to find

those responsible," Mutase said.

"The area is near Boni forest where al-Shabab is thought to operate from. In the past, Kenyan security forces have been going in and out of that forest to try to weed out al-Shabab fighters," she added.

Al-Shabab has maintained a campaign of deadly bomb and gun attacks despite being ejected from their bases in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, and other areas years ago.

The group also carries out frequent attacks in neighbouring Kenya, which sent thousands of its troops into Somalia to fight al-Shabab.

This attack comes nearly a year after al-Shabab launched a deadly suicide attack on the upscale 14 Riverside complex in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, killing 21 people.

This week, they killed three passengers when they attacked a bus in Lamu County, police said.

Al Jazeera

BRIEFS

Several killed in ambush in Mozambique

MAPUTO - Several people died after a minibus was ambushed along a main road in a northern Mozambique province beset by a jihadist insurgency, villagers said. A police officer in Macomia district, about 100km south of Antadora village, the scene the attack, confirmed the ambush which occurred on Friday, but gave no details of casualties. Police were called in to intervene but it was too late to help the victims, said the policeman who asked not to be named. "This is the first confirmed attack this year, in restive Cabo Delgado province," he said. **Afp**

Libya's votes against Turkish involvement

TRIPOLI - Libya's parliament has voted unanimously against deals on security and maritime cooperation the UN-backed government in Tripoli signed with Turkey, days after Turkish lawmakers approved a troop deployment to chaos-ravaged Libya. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Fayeze Serraj, the head of Libya's Government of National Accord (GNA), signed the two controversial deals at a meeting in Istanbul in November. On Saturday the parliament, which backs a rival administration in eastern Libya, rejected the deals. **Al Jazeera**

Guinea Bissau vote results fraudulent

GUINEA - Guinea Bissau's losing presidential candidate has said the number of ballot papers cast in two rounds of voting exceeded registered voters by tens of thousands, a day after appealing to the Supreme Court to annul the result. Domingos Simoes Pereira has already rejected the result, telling party activists last Wednesday the vote was "full of irregularities, annulment and manipulation". Pereira, who heads the historic ruling party PAIGC, told a news conference on Saturday, the number of ballot papers exceeded those registered by 30 000. **Afp**

Chad troops leave Nigeria

ABUJA - had has ended a months-long mission fighting Boko Haram in neighbouring Nigeria and withdrawn its 1 200-strong force across their common border, an army spokesman told AFP over the weekend. "It's our troops who went to aid Nigerian soldiers months ago returning home. They have finished their mission," spokesman Colonel Azem Bermendoa said. "None of our soldiers remains in Nigeria," he added, without specifying whether they might be replaced following Friday's pullout. **Afp**

ESWATINI
Observer

ENTERTAINMENT

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POETIC NIGHT: Night of Poetry and Comedy performers with ENCAC CEO Stanley Dlamini and ENYC CEO Makhosami Dlamini after the show. (Pics: Nokwanda Sibandze)



MR FUNNY: Mcola the Comedian during his set.

COMEDY, POETRY A PERFECT COMBINATION

BY NOKWANDA SIBANDZE

COMEDY and poetry proved to be a perfect combination at the Night of Poetry and Comedy on Friday at The George Hotel.

The show featured a number of local poets and comedians and they were joined by South African poets Xoli Zion Vilakazi and Siyabonga Mpungose.

Starting off the night was local comedian Mcola the Comedian. Although the crowd did not receive most of his jokes, the upcoming comedian managed to get a few laughs from the audience.

After a session of comedy, it was time for poetry rendered by Ngwane Mahiya. The impending poet immediately received snaps from the crowd as he recited his first poem.

He also had a few CDs, which he said were recordings of his poems that were produced locally, adding that they were available for sale.

As he continued to play around with words, Mahiya invited another upcoming poet, Festival B, to join him in reciting a poem that they had writ-



MY CHILD: Gogo entertains the crowd with his jokes.

ten together.

Soon after the two were done, internet sensation Gogo took to the stage. It was obvious that most people were eagerly waiting for the comedian as they started laughing even before he could say anything.

The comedian delivered a stomach-cramping performance. Making



LAUGHTER: A section of the crowd laughing their lungs out during the event

fun of some of the members of the audience, Gogo performed for a few minutes, leading to the crowd screaming for an encore.

Although the comedian did not come back to the stage, the audience were still in for a treat as singer Chief Umtukulu serenaded them with his voice. Performing his single 'Neo

nco', the vocalist managed to get some of the crowd dancing.

As if the crowd was not having enough fun, South African poet Xoli Zion Vilakazi took to the stage.

She immediately declared that she was a feminist which was proven by all her poems. Her poems were about women empowerment and issues

faced by women.

She closed with a poem about gender-based violence in which she pleaded with men to help women stand and fight against the problem.

The poet was followed by her friend and internet sensation Siyabonga Mpungose. Mpungose did what he is known for, rendering poems that had everyone glued to the stage.

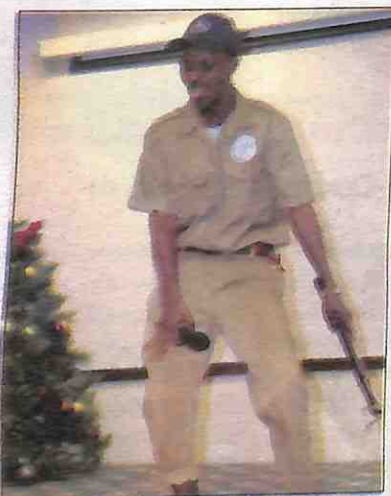
Mpungose said he was excited to be in the country as people of Eswatini had been asking him to come visit the kingdom.

"I was humbled to see the excitement from locals when they saw us. We came here early and as we went about selling the tickets, the reaction from the people was amazing. I promise that next time I will bring my entire team because they too have to experience what I experienced here today," he said.

Mpungose also promised to bring her daughter Imanathi, who is also taking the internet by storm with her videos.

The organisers of the show expressed gratitude to the Eswatini National Council of Arts and Culture and Eswatini National Youth Council for their support.

"The two councils always support us. The fact that the two heads of the councils are here tonight means a lot to us and it shows that they are not only willing to support what we do but they also want to see us succeed," said Bandzile Mngomezulu.



MC: Mr Sey displays his dance moves.



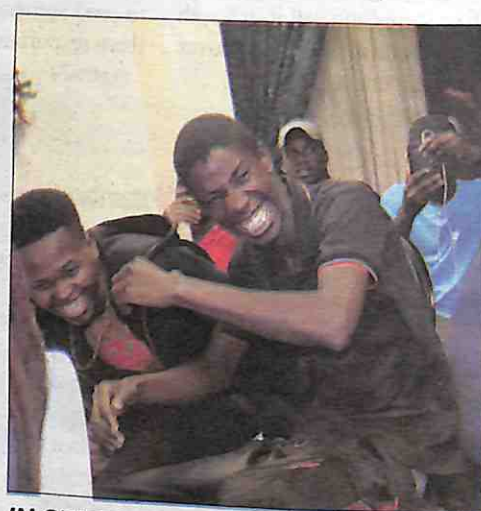
MR POET: Siyabonga Mpungose gestures during his performance.



EMOTION: Xoli Zion Vilakazi recites a poem.



WORD: Ngwane Mahiya serenades the crowd with his poems.



IN STITCHES: Comedy lovers in stitches during Gogo's set.

Sfiso Nene coming back to Eswatini

BY SETSABILE NKAMBULE

SOUTH African comedian Sfiso Nene will be in the kingdom on April 3 for a one man show hosted by Smallz the Comedian.

According to Smallz, the show was a continuation of what Nene started the last time he performed in the kingdom.

"Comedy lovers attended his show the last time he was around and they have been asking us to bring him back. So, in the spirit of our commitment to giving the people what

they want, Sfiso Nene will be in the Kingdom of Eswatini for one night," he said.

He said they were currently in negotiations, adding that all details would be released once all key logistics had been finalised, but the date had been confirmed. "He will be supported by a finely selected team of some of our own talented comedians. This will be our second beautiful and memorable event," he added.

Smallz requested all lovers of quality comedy in the Kingdom to follow all their social media pages for updates on the event and everything

they had lined up for the public. Nene confirmed that he would be coming to the country stating that he was excited about the show could not wait for his visit to the kingdom.

Supportive

"The people of Eswatini have been very supportive of my craft as every time I come to the country, the love I get always humbles me. The one man show will be a token of appreciation to Emaswati for all this love and as usual I will come bearing gifts of endless laughter and memories. Emaswati should come in their numbers for what will certainly go down as their best laughter-filled night of 2020. All this will be delivered in

collaboration with the kingdom's most talented comics led by my brother Smallz the Comedian," he said. Nene is a South African comedian based in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal. He was last in the country during the 'The Night Eswatini went to Comedy Paradise' show, where he performed alongside Nonto R, Vusi Mongwe and Simphiwe Shembe.

COMING BACK: Comedian Sfiso Nene.



SAVE THE DATE FOR POP SUNDAY

BY ANDILE DLAMINI

THE Motherland X team plans to host yet another edition of the famous event, Pop Sunday, on February 2.

The event will be held at the Albert Millin. This was confirmed by one of the founders of Motherland X, Mkay.

"We want this to be one of

those events that people will never forget and we would appreciate their support," said Mkay.

According to the DJ, the event would have sporting tournaments, food stands, games for the entire family and music.

Course

"The line-up for this edition will be announced in due course, but we want to make this one extra special," Mkay said.

The last show was on December 28 and it was a huge success as after a week of the show, social media was still abuzz with how much fun they had at event despite the heavy rains on the day.

The show saw hundreds brave the afternoon heat for the five-aside tournament games and persevered through the rain to watch their favourite artists such as Velemseni and Tenderness perform. Local photographer Shaun Desousa was the deejay of the day.

Pop Sundays are bought to you courtesy of Motherland X. This shows have definitely taken Mbabane by storm as they do not only host local deejays and artists, but they also have stalls for local entrepreneurs such as the champagne lounge, pasta bar to name a few.

POP SUNDAY: One of Pop Sunday founders Mkay.

Mega Lounge introduces karaoke night

BY PHETSILE MAMBA

MORE music for fun lovers as Mega Lounge introduces Karaoke Night from this Wednesday.

This was confirmed by co-founder Samkelo Zulu. He said the lounge would have Karaoke Nights every Wednesday.

Zulu D said this was a concept they had always wanted to bring to people because they believed it created a fun and happy environment. He also said the karaoke was open for everyone. He said people who felt like displaying their vocal abilities could come to the lounge and register for the day then choose a song they would to perform from the list of songs they would have.

Zulu revealed that the songs would be from international and local artists, saying as long as they had lyrics of the song, they would add it to their playlist.

"We encourage our Swati artists to provide us with their music together with the lyrics. This will not be a competition, but we believe it can unveil some of the rough talent the kingdom has and we would definitely take note of those," Zulu shared.

Zulu urged all those interested to come early to register as the show would start at 7pm till at 10pm. "With this not being a competition we encourage everyone to come through and have a bit of fun. Bring your friends, sing in a duet or in a group. The purpose of the karaoke nights is to see everyone having fun in the name of music. There will be prizes for the best performers from each Wednesday," Zulu added.

Mozaik starts year with 'Ngabe Ngahuzuka'

BY SETSABILE NKAMBULE

MOZAIK the Producer has released a single titled 'Ngabe Ngahuzuka'.

According to the artist, 2019 was a very challenging year for him, hence the song narrating what he went through and how he survived.

He said it was an honest expression of his most vulnerable and intimate experiences.

"I fell into depression right after releasing 'NowHere' as I found myself in a space where I was unable to create music for months. Coming out of this depression has taken a lot of grace, support and strength, something that many people can relate to," he said.

He said the 2019's challenges were, however, a blessing in disguise.

The artist said this allowed him to confront issues that had been left

unresolved and unhealed for years, adding that with the New Year being a new season, he felt inspired to create a song that would tell his story.

"This song is my story and I hope that it can touch people, whether they are believers or not. They should be grateful for having survived the challenges of their story too," he said.

He stated that through the song, he was expressing appreciation to God for sustaining and keeping him safe throughout all the hardships he endured in the past year.

Mozaik said through his song, he was also trying to tell people that though life might be tough for a certain period, it gets better in time.

He further said the song was available on Apple Music/iTunes for download and streaming and was also made available through a streaming link for SoundCloud but would be taken down in 24 hours for people

using paid streaming services.

"I will be making an official release for projects to be released this year. As a start, we are releasing Mandisa Mamba's album as another single titled 'Don't Let Me Go', has been released just this past week," he said.

CLAIMING GROUNDS: Mozaik the Producer.



KARAOKE: Mega Lounge co-founder Samkelo Zulu.



Celebville

International Celebrity News

BRENDA FASSIE'S FILM FINALLY GETS THE GREEN LIGHT

JOHANNESBURG - The contested biopic of late icon Brenda Fassie's life is steaming ahead, with producers confident the film will be released in late 2020 or early 2021.

Showbiz Bee announced in January last year that it had partnered with the Brenda Fassie estate and the Legaci Nova Entertainment group to produce a biopic about Brenda's life and her journey to stardom.

However, Brenda's former manager and producer Chicco Twala claimed that he had the rights to any film on the star's life and had not given the companies permission to go ahead with the project.

He was granted a court interdict, stopping the project from going ahead until it was decided who had the rights to make the film.

While the film's producers said

they were not interested in meeting with Chicco to iron out their differences, they said the delays were costing them big time.

"The delays are not good for anyone. It's a financial burden to us as well. We have 18 to 32 people working for us between the UK and South Africa. Those people need to be paid but the project is not moving forward. The longer the delays, the more it will hurt financially," Vaughn Eaton of Legaci Nova Entertainment, who represents the company in South Africa, said.

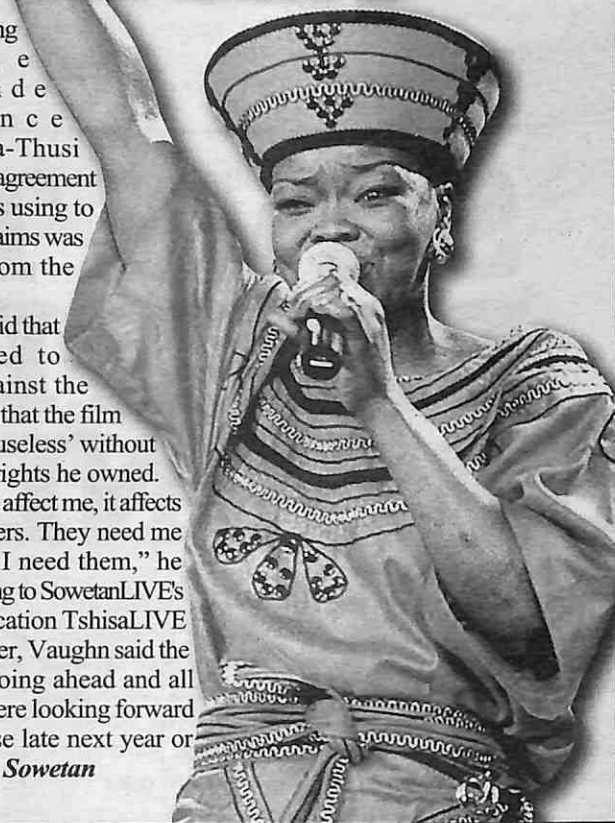
Arguments to make the order permanent were heard last September and judgment was reserved.

In March this year, the high court in Pretoria dismissed Chicco's application to permanently stop Brenda's son Bongani from going ahead with the movie.

In her ruling Judge Nomonde Patience Mngqibisa-Thusi said that an agreement Chicco was using to prove his claims was 'invalid from the outset'.

Chicco said that he planned to appeal against the ruling, and that the film would be 'useless' without the music rights he owned.

"It doesn't affect me, it affects the producers. They need me more than I need them," he said. Speaking to SowetanLIVE's sister publication TshisaLIVE in November, Vaughn said the film was going ahead and all involved were looking forward to its release late next year or early 2021. *Sowetan*



Prayers for amapiano group MFR Souls after horror car crash

JOHANNESBURG - Fans from across Mzansi have united in prayer after members of amapiano group MFR Souls survived a terrible accident.

The Love you Tonight hitmakers were rushed to hospital after being involved in an accident on their way to a show on New Year's Day.

A picture of their badly damaged vehicle was shared by a page using the group's name on Facebook and circulated on social media.

The caption to the post read: "God is great guys. I can't believe we made it alive."

It was later shared by DJ Prince Kaybee, who said that he was on his way to hospital to see them.

A message on the group's Facebook page confirmed the accident and said the two group members, Tumelo Nedondwe and Tumelo Mabe, were 'seriously injured'. It also announced that the pair would not be able to attend to any gigs until the end of the month to allow them to recover.

Social media was flooded with messages praying for their speedy recovery.

Among those was a message from rapper Cassper Nyovest, who shared his relief that the duo had survived the accident.

Sowetan

Harvey Weinstein Defence Strategy - accusers didn't break contact with me

HOLLYWOOD - Harvey Weinstein will go on trial next week for sexual assault, and as fierce as the prosecutor has been, Weinstein's lawyers have their counterattack planned.

Weinstein's lead attorney, Donna Rotunno, tells TMZ, the defence will attempt to pick apart the testimony of the alleged victims by making what she calls a 'common sense' argument that people who get assaulted don't maintain contact with the perpetrator. Rotunno says she has text messages and proof of subsequent interactions that support their position.

"We know prosecutors will call a

psychiatrist who will testify that it's common for sexual assault victims to delay in reporting the crime and they will often continue to interact with their assailant."

As we reported, a lead detective in the case advised one of the initial accusers to delete information from her phone information that helped Weinstein. Prosecutors decided to drop that accuser from the case to avoid credibility issues with the jury. The defence has subpoenaed that cop, but a decision has not been made on whether to call him to testify. On the one hand, the defence doesn't want to tell jurors there was a third accuser. But, on the other

hand, the dirty cop does raise credibility issues with the investigation.

Rotunno also says she has also subpoenaed other witnesses who will testify about the relationships between Weinstein and his two accusers the way they interacted, how frequently, etc.

As for picking a jury, Rotunno says women can be fair and impartial and she is not automatically excluding them. She believes some women feel the pendulum has swung too far in one direction with regard to the #MeToo movement.

Rotunno won't say if Weinstein would testify, but it would be shocking if he does. *TMZ*

Radio veteran 'Chilli' M has died

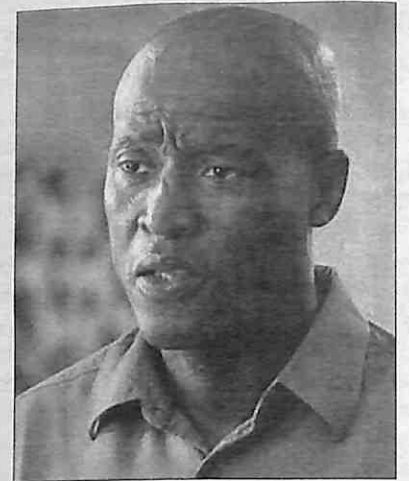
JOHANNESBURG: Former Ukhozi FM DJ Vukani 'Chilli M' Masinga has died, a close friend of the star confirmed to TshisaLIVE.

Isaac Sithole told TshisaLIVE that the radio personality died on Thursday afternoon at a Johannesburg hospital. He said the radio host was rushed to hospital on Thursday morning and died later that day. "He died

from natural causes. The family plans to bury him next week Saturday," he said. Fans have flooded social media with tributes to the star. Chilli M was left heartbroken by the death of his daughter, Nkanyenzi, in 2015. She was killed in a car accident while returning from a family holiday. He was axed by Ukhozi FM in 2016 after he admitted to taking a bribe from an aspiring kwaito group, later saying he did so because he had been having money problems since the death of his daughter. *Sowetan*



DAILY SOAPIE DIGEST



Catch Nkunzi on Uzalo.



Vava Voom is getting very worried and afraid, thinking something might have happened to Saddam. There's high expectations for Thokozani to do well with the upcoming matric results and she starts to crack under pressure. Ntwenhle invites Jabu for lunch and the sparks start to fly.



Claudette and Lincoln receive a curious request. Post the wedding, Phindile finds there are pros and cons to being a Matabane makoti. The matric results are out.



Vho-Masindi thinks getting rid of Tshildzi will solve her troubles. One of the Zikalala's fights for his life after what happened at the imbeleko. Vho-Masindi is unimpressed that Hangwani let Mudi go home with KK.



Lesedi receives devastating news. The spark between two friends is clearly still there. Mavusana isn't done making life hard for Cosmo.



Brutus is out for blood when he finds out Skhumbuzo stole from him. Amo is jealous when she sees Kagiso with Siyanda.



Nkunzi realises MaNgcobo may just move on again, Khehla's announcement makes it impossible for Gabisile to enjoy her picnic, and even though Fikile is bored, she won't go back.



Confronted with indisputable proof that a liar is finally telling the truth, Quinton finds it hard not to feel sympathy. Yvonne realises that now she has opened a door on her past, it will be very hard to close it.

MEME OF THE DAY

Her: I like being choked!

Me: Say no more...



When grandma's got you

TODAY'S HOROSCOPE

Capricorn December 22 – January 19

A close friend or love partner you haven't seen for a while could finally make arrangements to see you, Capricorn. You therefore could spend much of the day in a great mood, looking forward to the encounter ahead. You'll have a lot of fascinating information to share.



Aquarius January 20 – February 18

The house might seem rather empty today, Aquarius, as most of the other members of your household are probably out and about. This is, however, a good time for you to take care of some projects of your own that you've been putting off.



Pisces February 19 – March 20

Someone close to you might not be feeling very well, Pisces, and you might feel the need to remain nearby and take care of this person. By all means do this. However, bear in mind that your empathic abilities are operating at a very high level today, and therefore you could actually experience some of their discomfort.



Aries March 21 – April 19

A goal that you may have been working toward for a long time might still seem very distant right now, Aries. Therefore, today you could actually find yourself giving up on it. This doesn't imply that what you want will never happen. In fact, sometimes letting go of a dream can actually cause it to manifest.



Taurus April 20 – May 20

A member of your household may be having troubles, Taurus, and therefore you might consider staying home from work in order to help them get through it all. Nonetheless, you have career responsibilities that you need to fulfill. Whether to stay home or go to work may be a difficult decision to make today, but be sure you weigh all possible factors. Probably your housemate will insist that all is well and send you to work.



Gemini May 21 – June 21

An important career concern could require considerable effort on your part today in order to enable you to advance whatever it is you're trying to accomplish, Gemini. At some point during the day, you may be plagued by doubts as to your ability to do this. However, don't let this cause you to panic. All you need is to muster a little energy and stay focused on the task at hand.



Cancer June 22 – July 22

A trip that you wanted to take may have to be postponed, Cancer, probably for financial reasons. You'll want to make the journey in the company of someone who's financially strapped right now.



This could be disappointing, but remember that this is only a delay. You'll be able to have your vacation at a later date. Don't be afraid to start making the arrangements.

Leo July 23 – August 22

The need to complete an important task could have you mustering a far higher level of self-control than you're used to, Leo. Perseverance and determination could dominate your mood, and therefore you could accomplish wonders. However, be sure to take breaks occasionally, and remember to relax from time to time.



Virgo August 23 – September 22

A business or romantic partner could be in a rather schizoid mood today, Virgo. You'll probably spend a lot of time together, and during the course of the day your friend could jump between enthusiasm and gloom. This could drive you crazy, as you won't know how to respond. All you can do is make sure all attention stays focused on the issues at hand.



Libra September 23 – October 23

Generally, you tend to be rather ingenious where work is concerned, Libra, but today you may feel that the fountain of innovation has totally dried up. No matter how hard you try, you probably won't be able to muster any new ideas whatsoever. Chances are your biorhythms are low, and therefore your mind is working at a slower pace than usual.



Scorpio October 24 – November 21

A crisis of values may confront you today, Scorpio. Someone you care about might need you to do something for them that you don't feel comfortable doing, and this could put you in a tough spot. You probably won't want to do it, but your friend needs your help. Consider every possible contingency before saying yes or no.



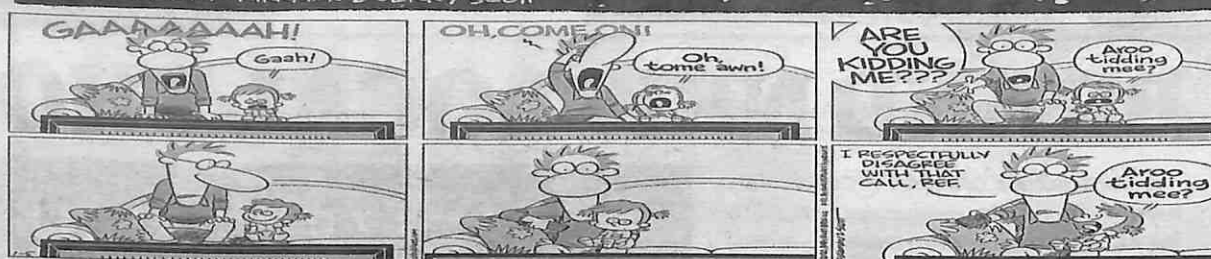
Sagittarius November 22 – December 21

Today you might feel a little gloomy without knowing why, Sagittarius, and you could spend a lot of time trying to find a reason. There probably isn't any concrete reason. It's likely that you're simply responding to low biorhythms.



BABY BLUES

BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT



BUCKLES

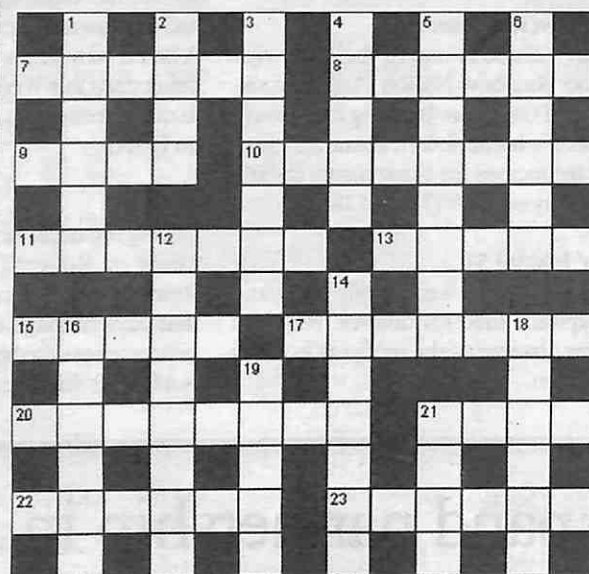


HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



PUZZLE CHOICE

CRYPTIC 31



Across

- Live here, adores idea essentially (6)
- Country rearranged on a tin (6)
- Sounds like a naked animal (4)
- Somewhere hot, slow pace mostly, endless choice and unfinished beer (8)
- Corresponding to parts of the alphabet (7)
- Repulse renegade with change of heart (5)
- Taste starting off is plentiful (5)
- Serving of wine and wild animal first off (7)
- Pro icons with disorienting sting in the tail (8)
- Replace pawn with bishop in animal friends wagers (4)
- She ate dinner warmed up a little (6)
- Mythical beast to last too long (6)

Down

- Calm essential in wiser enemy (6)
- Sounds like a searching look or landing (4)
- Greet us with a sign for a change (7)
- Not off electrically charged particle can make your eyes water (5)
- Loud step mid-evening Tango (8)
- Find security device mostly consumed (6)
- Put up with confused toe alert (8)
- Ripped commotion windstorm (7)
- Replace secured middle England with taunted central Denmark (6)
- Stirred up potion is a possibility (6)
- Replace beginning of February discoveries with weekend varieties (5)
- Craft found in a limbo atoll (4)

LOL

Laughing Out Loud

A MOTIVATED BOSS

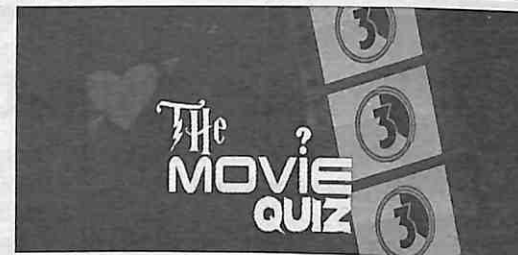
My boss arrived at work in a brand-new Lamborghini. "Wow," I said, "That's an amazing car." He replied,

"If you work hard, put all your hours in, and strive for excellence, I'll get another one next year."

DID YOU KNOW

- A cow has to eat grass to produce milk and grass is living.
- The most common name in the world is Mohammed.
- The cigarette lighter was invented before the match.
- Americans on average eat 18 acres of pizza every day.
- The "pound" key on your keyboard (#) is called an octotroph.

MOVIE QUIZ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



FRIDAY'S QUIZ

- Which animated remake of a 1994 film stars voice actors Donald Glover, Seth Rogen,
- Chiwetel Ejiofor?

Answer:

A. The Lion King

TODAY'S QUIZ

Directed by Michael Dougherty, 'King of the Monsters' is the 35th film in which iconic movie fran-

chise?

- Godzilla
- Apocalypse



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NEWS



BRAND NEW LOCAL SHOWS TO WATCH

THE new decade promises to deliver only more world-class local entertainment, starting with these homegrown not-to-be-missed shows.

South African television continues to get so better and better over the last few years – and 2020 promises to deliver only more world-class local entertainment, starting with the shows below.

Kom Ons Braai: Familie en Vriende

Braaiing is every South African's national pastime, but what happens when three groups from very different backgrounds come together around the fire? Find out in this intriguing and utterly delectable reality cooking series. Who knows? You may even come across your next favourite braai recipe!

Tyd met Aleit S5

Join wedding and events planner extraordinaire, Aleit Swanepoel as he wines and dines other celebrities. Guests include actress and singer Zenobia Kloppers, actress Lizz Meiring and musician Willem Botha, and don't miss newly crowned Miss Universe Zozibini Tunzi as she shares her spectacular journey.

The Omen S1

Think Charmed, but for men... A successful lawyer discovers that he comes from a long line of witches and must decide whether to follow his destiny.

Die Byl S2

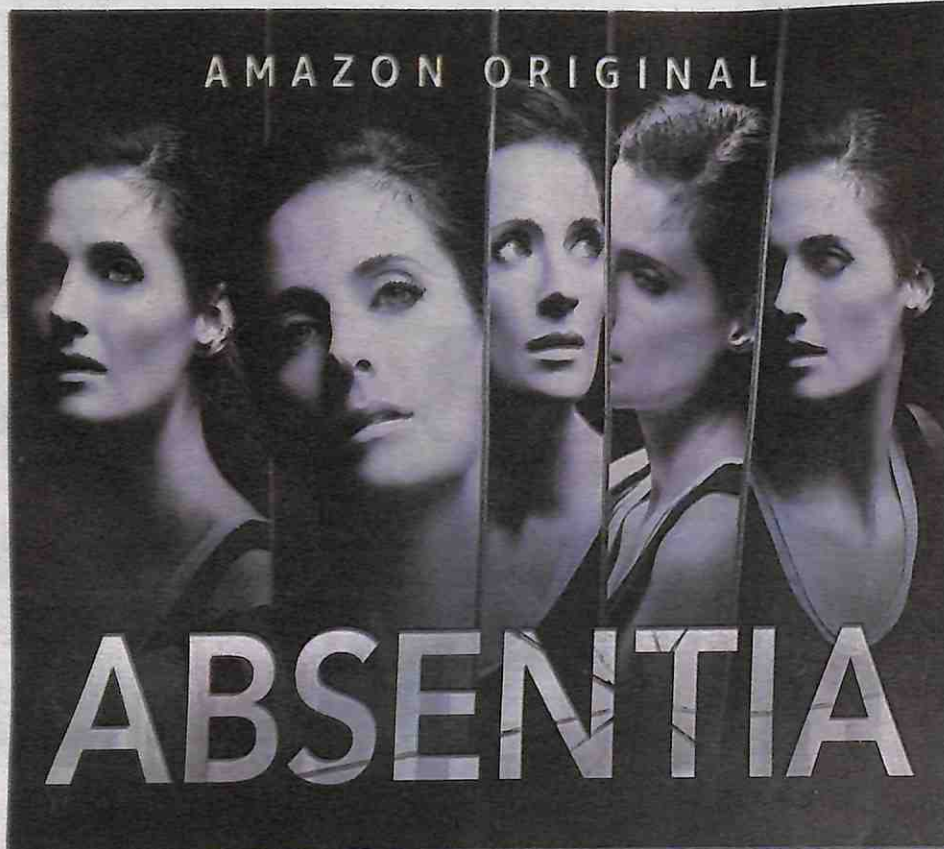
Fans of locally flavoured crime and investigation stories can look forward to another season of Colonel Piet van Byl and his team's heart-stopping investigations as they return to our screens – five years later. While his sleuthing skills are still on point and he is still hot on the heels of the latest serial killers, his personal life has fallen apart.

Gebroke Harte S1

Two babies born on the same day... two families looking forward to bringing home their new bundles who are about to change their lives forever... But then an accident results in the babies being swapped. Now, 15 years later, fate brings the two families together again. Starts today on VIA (147) at 17:00

Hotel S4

The Fransen Hotel may still be standing, but just barely. While Ferdie thinks it may finally be time to move on, the rest of the staff are



determined to save the hotel – as long as their messy love lives don't get in the way. Starts today on kykNET (144) at 20:00

Mnakwethu S1

Expect plenty of emotional moments in this isPedi and Venda reality series. Married men who are polygamists are helped to introduce their existing wives to their belief system. Starts tomorrow on Mzansi Magic (161) at 20:00

Kaap, Kerrie en Koesisters S5

Cape Malay cuisine is one of the many rich results of our Rainbow Nation. And twin sisters Fatima and Gadja are bringing it into every South African's home. Learn about the history and get the recipes for some iconic dishes. Starts Thursday on VIA (147) at 18:00

Kwa Mam' Mkhize S1

Last year, Durban power couple S'bu and Shauwn Mpisane filed for divorce. Now, we get to follow Shauwn as she readjusts to life as a single woman.

Starts Thursday on Mzansi Magic (161) at 20:00

Boer Soek 'n Vrou

The 10 farmers – those who found love and those who didn't – meet for one last time to share their journeys. Find out who is living happily ever after and who regrets their final choices. Thursday on kykNET (144) at 20:00

BRAND-NEW SERIES FOR 2020

M-Net has three new series starting in 2020 and our favourite medical drama returns too! A brand-new series with a 95% Rotten Tomato rating starts this Wednesday and Dr Grey returns to our screens with the same old stories. Only on DStv.

Jett S1

Having earned an incredible 95 per cent approval rating on Rotten Tomatoes, this brand-new series is a stylish and cinematic crime drama that pays homage to almost all classic crime genres across the board. Daisy 'Jett' Kowalski is a former thief fresh out of prison and already

back in with her old gang. Will she be able to dodge the coppers this time? This tense action series stars Carla Gugino (The Haunting of Hill House) and Giancarlo Esposito (Breaking Bad). Starts Wednesday on M-Net (101) at 22:00

BH90210

This meta comedy sees the stars of the original teen drama Beverly Hills 90210 return – with a twist. They all play themselves as they deal with the launch of the reboot of the 1990s TV series. Confused? Don't worry – all you really need to know is that you'll be seeing Jason Priestley, Shannen Doherty, Tori Spelling and the rest of the gang again. Oh, and it's really, really funny.

Every Saturdays on M-Net (101) at 20:00

The Unicorn S1

Lauded by Variety as a "thoughtful and sophisticated sitcom about what follows mourning", Walton Goggins (The Accountant, Justified) stars in this brand-new series as a single father trying to find his feet after the death of his wife. To everyone's surprise, his "widower" status ups his dating game and he soon finds himself fighting off the ladies.

Ever Saturdays on M-Net (101) at 17:30

Grey's Anatomy S16

The joys and heartaches of our favourite medical drama continue with a special double bill, which sees Jo in a psychiatric facility, Maggie and Jackson fighting in the fog, and Meredith facing the consequences of her insurance fraud. Starts today on M-Net (101) at 19:00

Absentia S2

As season two of this thrilling drama kicks off, there are new crimes to contend with, although most of the cast are still reeling from the shocks of season 1. Emily may have confronted her captor at the end of the last season, but her psychological journey is far from over. Haunted by a memory, Emily has to determine whether she can fully trust herself.

Starts tomorrow on M-Net (101) at 22:00

Relive the 90s with the reboot BH90210 and Emily tries to figure out if she can truly trust herself in Absentia season 2. All this and more on DStv this week!

Missed an episode? Sign up for DStv Now – it's an online streaming service for all DStv subscribers. Watch the channels you watch on your decoder at home, but on the internet! Go to now.dstv.com on your laptop and Catch Up on the episodes you missed.

WWE, SuperSport expand partnership in Africa

DStv channel 128 is the home of the brand new 24/7 WWE channel, launched 1 January 2020.

WWE and SuperSport, Africa's premier sports broadcaster, have agreed a multi-year extension to continue delivering WWE's weekly flagship

programming live in more than 50 countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa, while expanding the partnership to include a dedicated WWE channel on DStv.

The new WWE channel will air Raw, SmackDown and NXT live each week and will

feature premium WWE programming including 205 Live, Ride Along, WWE Chronicle and Table for 3.

The 24/7 channel launched on DStv channel 128 beginning Wednesday, January 1, 2020 and builds on the success of the WWE pop-up channel that launched this year. SuperSport channels will continue to air Raw, SmackDown and NXT live each week and be home to all of WWE's monthly pay-per-view events.

"The fans of the WWE universe asked for it, and we are delighted to deliver," said Gideon Khobane, chief executive of SuperSport. "WWE programming has proven to be compelling content with riveting storylines and insane action, which our viewers absolutely love. This is a big

step and a great start to the new year.

"SuperSport is a valued partner who shares our approach to engaging and entertaining our fans," said Stefan Kastenmüller, WWE Senior Vice President & Group General Manager, EMEA. "We are thrilled to expand our partnership with a new, 24/7 WWE channel which will super-serve our passionate fans in the region."

Getting in on the action

Until 16 February 2020, the WWE channel will be available on DStv Access, DStv Family, DStv Compact, DStv Compact Plus as well as DStv Premium packages. Thereafter, the channel will be available on DStv Compact, DStv Compact Plus and DStv Premium.

To stay connected to the action, upgrade your DStv package and download DStv Now on your Android or Apple device and watch anytime, anywhere.



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INDEX

1. NOTICES
 - General Notices
 - Legal Notices
 - Church Notices
 - Announcements
 - Change of Surname
 - Sales & Foreclosure
 - General Items
 - Auctions
2. BUSINESS SERVICES
 - Special Services
 - Businesses Opportunities
 - Restaurant, Catering & Office
- Equipment
 - Garage sale
 - Other Business Items
 - Maintenance & Construction
 - Motoring and Transport
3. JOBS or VACANCIES
4. MISCELLANEOUS
 - Medical & Natural Healing
 - Tuition & Courses
5. HEALTH & BEAUTY
6. PETS & PET ACCESSORIES
 - Pets & Adoptions
 - Cats & Kittens
 - Dogs & Puppies
 - Birds & Poultry
 - Fish & Aquarium
 - Other Pet & Accessories
7. ELECTRONICS
 - TV's, DVD Players, Decoders &
 - Satellites
 - Household Appliances
 - Music Equipment, Amplifiers,
 - Equalizers & Speakers
 - Mobile Devices, Smart Phones
 - & Tablets
 - Computers, Laptops, Cameras
 - & Optics
 - Games, Gaming Consoles &
 - Software
8. HOUSEHOLD
 - Domestic
 - Clothing
 - Baby and Kids
 - Furniture
 - Hobbies, Model Toys,
 - Handcraft
 - Wanted
10. BUILDING, GARDENING & DIY
 - Woodworking
 - Machinery & Tools
 - Plumbing & Electrical
 - Other Building & DIY
 - Plants, Trees & Flowers
 - Garden Furniture & Appliances
 - Other Gardening
11. FARMING EQUIPMENT
 - Car Spares or Parts
 - Bike Spares
 - Truck, Bus and Trailer Spares
 - Stripping for Spares
 - Farming Equipment &
 - Machinery
 - Livestock
 - Other Farming
12. LEISURE, SPORT & EVENTS
 - Fitness
 - Tennis & squash
 - Watersport
 - Karate, Boxing & Judo
 - Angling & Cycling
 - Other Sport
 - Caravans, Campers and Trailers
 - Leisure, Community and
 - Events
 - Music and Instruments
 - Camping and Outdoor
13. PROPERTY
 - Residential
 - Commercial
 - Farms and Vacant Plots
 - Holiday & Accommodation
 - Apartments / Flats / Houses to
14. VEHICLES
 - Cars
 - Bikes
 - Classics and Custom Builds
 - Trucks
 - Buses Farming
 - Trailers
 - Aircraft
15. DEATH NOTICES

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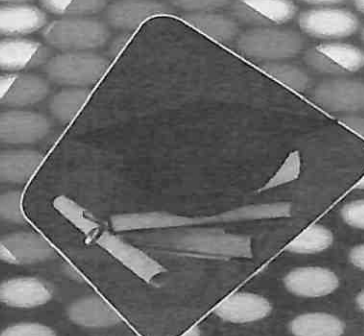
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Lloyd Harris suffers defeat in ATP Cup opener in Australia

CAPE TOWN – After a promising start, South Africa's Lloyd Harris was defeated by Dušan Lajovic who won 3-6, 7-6 [4], 6-3 to give Serbia an early lead 1-0 in the ATP Cup Group A match at the Pat Rafter Arena, Brisbane, Australia, over the weekend.

Given the players' current world

rankings, Harris (world-ranked 99) was the underdog going into the match against Lajovic (39), although the South African might have thought otherwise since he recorded a straight-sets win in their previous clash last September.

Harris looked in good nick in the opening set after service breaks in

the first and ninth games for a 6-3 win after 32 minutes. He also dominated the aces count 5-0 in this set.

As the second set wound its course, the experienced Lajovic grew stronger and Harris battled to hold serve for most of the set. Harris looked increasingly out of sorts but held out for a tiebreak which Lajovic won 7-4

after a protracted 66-minute second set battle. There was a greater measure of fight from Harris in the third but his body language by this time suggested that he was fighting exhaustion. Lajovic, as he admitted in a post-match interview, sensed his opponent's exhaustion and sprayed his returns wide and fast.

This helped to sap Harris' strength and although he briefly raised hopes in the SA camp by breaking back in the 5th game. However, after a 3-all stalemate, Lajovic never looked back and won the next three games on the trot to wrap up the set 6-3 after 37 minutes. After this setback, South Africa will rely on Kevin Anderson to save the day. He goes up against World No. 2 Novak Djokovic in a later clash. *African News Agency*

MCGREGOR CHALLENGES KHABIB TO A REMATCH

LONDON – Conor McGregor has called out his old nemesis Khabib Nurmagomedov for a rematch, ahead of his long-awaited return to the UFC.

The Irish fighter is preparing for his bout with Donald Cerrone at UFC 246 in Las Vegas on January 18. However, McGregor already has his eyes set on Khabib, who he has a very interesting past with.

"He is trembling," McGregor told his website The Mac Life.

"That man is trembling. He doesn't want it. He doesn't want it. You get it. He's trying not to lose it

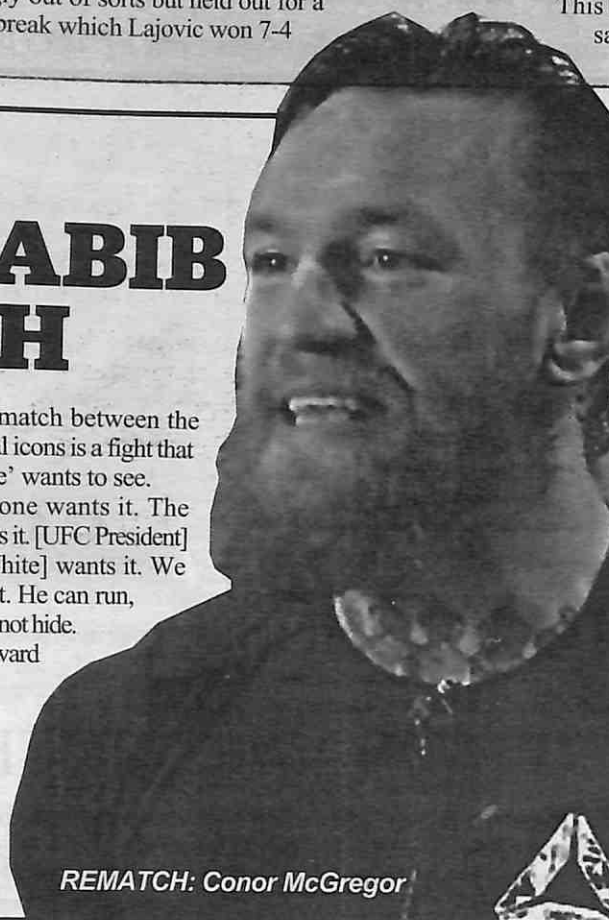
again. I just smell sh*t. That's all it is. He's afraid, and that's it".

The two fought as the headline fight on the UFC 229 card, where the Russian won by submission in the fourth round. McGregor blamed his "poor preparation" for the loss as he did not seem his usual aggressive inside the octagon. Both McGregor and Nurmagomedov have had their fair share of controversies throughout their heated rivalry with arrests, post-fight brawls and attacks on team buses tampering their image. McGregor then went on to explain

how a rematch between the two global icons is a fight that 'everyone' wants to see.

"Everyone wants it. The boss wants it. [UFC President] Dana [White] wants it. We all want it. He can run, but he cannot hide. I look forward to it."

AFP



REMATCH: Conor McGregor

Sweden manager does not rule out Ibrahimovic comeback

STOCKHOLM – Sweden Manager Janne Andersson said striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic is not ruled out of playing for Sweden again, despite being critical of team selection in the past.

Last year, Ibrahimovic criticised Andersson's selections for the national team suggesting in a newspaper interview that the manager overlooked players with immigrant backgrounds.

Other players rejected Ibrahimovic's claim. Andersson said on Saturday it was not an issue.

"I'm pretty good at putting things behind me," he said.

"At the time, I was sad and disappointed but it has passed, so he is welcome to get in touch if he feels he has changed his mind."

Contract

Ibrahimovic recently signed a six-month contract with Italian outfit AC Milan but the 38-year-old has not played for Sweden since announcing his international retirement after Euro 2016.

"The basic situation concerning players who have declined to play for the national team is, as I have said before, that they (can) contact me and say that they are interested," Andersson told the website Fotbollskanalen.

"Then we can take it from there. It's not more complicated than that," he added.

Andersson's remarks were made in Doha, Qatar where Sweden are preparing for a January tournament with matches against Moldova and Kosovo.

Sweden have qualified for this year's Euro 2020 tournament in June.

DPA

Pathan announces retirement from all formats

MUMBAI – Indian all-rounder Irfan Pathan announced his retirement from all forms of the game, bringing the curtain down on an illustrious career which included a World Twenty20 triumph.

The 35-year-old left-arm seamer played 29 tests, 120 one dayers and 24 T20Is for India, picking a total of 301 international wickets.

"I have been fortunate to share the dressing room with greats of the game like (Sourav) Ganguly, (Rahul) Dravid and (VVS) Laxman. I am calling time on my career," Pathan announced on broadcaster Star Sports.

"I would like to thank my family for providing much-needed support. I would like to thank my fans. They have always hoped for my comeback. Their support has kept me going."

Pathan's biggest contribution to Indian cricket came in the game's shortest format as he was named man-of-the-match in the World T20 final against Pakistan in 2007. He took three crucial wickets as India lifted the trophy in Johannesburg.

He is one of three Indian bowlers to have claimed a test hat-trick and the first in the world to claim it in the first over of the match.

Pathan last played for India during the World T20 in 2012, but featured regularly in the domestic circuit.

"I will keep contributing to Indian cricket, but it is always better if someone else takes my place in domestic cricket," Pathan added.

Reuters

JOSEPH PARKER CONFIRMED FOR RETURN

NEW YORK – Joseph Parker is set to return with a fight in America next month according to his Manager David Higgins.

The former heavyweight champion is expected to jet out to Las Vegas in the coming days to start his training camp and prepare for a clash against an as yet unnamed opponent.

Parker, who lost his WBO title to Anthony Joshua in March 2018, was set to match up against Dereck Chisora back in October.

However the 27-year-old was ruled by illness caused by a suspected spider bite.

Higgins said his boxer is ready to make a return to the ring, as promoter Eddie Hearn finalises the details on his next opponent.



RETURNS: Former heavyweight champion Joseph Parker.

Higgins told Sky Sports: "There are concrete plans, which it's not my place to announce. But there is a date and a venue and it's the opponent we're waiting on."

"We've just been told it will be late February and (held in) the United States". *Sports Mail*

Bayern Munich sign hot prospect Alexander Nubel

MUNICH – Bayern Munich have signed goalkeeper Alexander Nubel as a long-term replacement for captain Manuel Neuer.

The Bundesliga champions announced on Saturday they had agreed to sign Nubel on a free transfer from Schalke and that he will join the club officially on July 1. Bayern Munich beat the likes of Barcelona, Atletico Madrid and AC Milan to Nubel's signature.

In a statement posted to the club website, Munich said: "Bayern and Nubel have agreed this transfer in the past days."

"The 23-year-old goalkeeper's contract with Schalke runs until June 30. Nubel arrives in Munich

without a transfer fee and on a five-year-deal."

Current stopper Manuel Neuer, 33, has recently come out and explained that he has no intention of 'fading' into the distance at the club, via Marca.

Tipped

Nubel has been tipped to take Neuer's place for both club and country – with the significant age gap of 10 years a primary factor for this transfer.

Schalke – the club Neuer also joined Bayern from – had been attempting to get Nubel to extend his contract

and had even made the former Germany Under 21 goalkeeper their team captain.

He turned down the club's offer to extend his contract in December. *DPA*



Robert Mugabe, death threats wrecked Hussain's World Cup dream

CAPE TOWN – Beset by illness, diminished by injuries and one Test down against resurgent opponents, England's cricketers were entitled to feel a little beleaguered as they wandered through the corridors of The Cullinan Hotel here last week.

If it felt as if they were under siege at their city centre base, though, Nasser Hussain can put their current situation into perspective.

The former England skipper still suppresses a shudder when he talks about The Cullinan. "That damned Cullinan Hotel," he called it in his autobiography, 'Playing With Fire', because it was there on the eve of the 2003 World Cup that he found himself at the centre of one of the biggest crises to have afflicted English cricket in the modern era. England were due to play against Zimbabwe in Harare in their opening game of the tournament that February but Hussain and others had become increasingly concerned about reports of widespread human rights abuses perpetrated by the regime of the dictator, Robert Mugabe.

Sports Mail



CHELSEA EYEING £60M MOVE FOR DAVID ALABA

LONDON - Chelsea are considering a £60 million bid for Bayern Munich left-back David Alaba, according to the Mirror.

Blues boss Frank Lampard is in the market for a new left-back after omitting Marcos Alonso from his squad over the festive period.

And the report claims Lampard has lost faith in Ederson, with Cesar Azpilicueta switching from right-back to left-back and Reece James coming into the team.

But the report claims Lampard is looking to add experience to his youthful team, and a deal could be struck this month after Chelsea had their transfer ban lifted.

Alaba has made 17 club appearances this season with the 27-year-old providing one goal and one assist.

The Austria international joined Bayern

...as Frank Lampard looks to fix problematic left back position



MOVE: David Alaba.

in 2008 and has won 20 major trophies. His contract with the Bundesliga cham-

pions will expire in June 2021. *The Mirror*

'Mourinho inspired me to sign new £150 000-a-week contract'

LONDON - Toby Alderweireld has revealed feeling wanted by Jose Mourinho helped inspire him to sign a new contract at Tottenham.

The Belgian defender had looked certain to leave Spurs this summer with his contract due to expire but the 30-year-old penned a £150 000-a-week deal just a month after Mourinho replaced Mauricio Pochettino as manager.

Mourinho had wanted to sign Alderweireld when he was Manchester United manager and the Spurs defender admitted that played a part in his decision.

"That's a thing that helped me stay as well," said Alderweireld. "And after five, six years with the previous manager, with a lot of respect to him, maybe to give a different wind, that helped a little bit."

"I want to say full respect for Pochettino. He brought me here. He made me a lot better. I'm forever grateful for what he did for the club and for me."

"It was not because of another manager that I signed. It was all the circumstances together. People think it's only on the pitch, or the new manager. "There were a lot of things involved with it. First of all, your family. I talked to my wife and about my family situation, a second kid on the way. First of all, I asked my wife: 'What do you want?' She said, 'I'm happy to stay,' - she loves it here - "but you can choose whatever you want." "The more I thought about it, about maybe a new episode somewhere else, the more I thought, "No, I just want to stay." *DPA*



REFS IN VAR PROTEST

LONDON - Premier League referees chiefs have been left frustrated by statements from football's lawmakers that suggested they are wrongly applying VAR rules when judging marginal off-sides.

VAR struck again during the FA Cup third round on Saturday as Wigan had a goal overturned at Leicester for a fractional offside while fans chanted 'F*** VAR'.

at Molineux as Manchester United were denied a penalty for a challenge on Brandon Williams by Wolves' Leander Dendoncker.

Last week the head of the game's lawmaking body IFAB, Lukas Brud, said that "if you spend multiple minutes trying to identify whether it is offside or not, then it's not clear and obvious and the original decision should stand. What we really need to stress is

that clear and obvious applies to every single situation that is being reviewed."

This was seen as criticism of how the Premier League have used VAR, with fans, players and managers incensed at seeing goals ruled out for players' armpits and toes being offside.

There is a feeling within the Professional Game Match Officials Board (PGMOL) that Brud's statement was misleading because they insist they are applying VAR on off-sides in line with IFAB's own

protocols. The protocols do not say that 'clear and obvious' applies to off-sides as they are seen as objective decisions, despite Mail on Sunday revelations that the technology is not accurate enough for them to know for certain.

Brud has since gone back on his comments, telling German outlet Sportschau "if the images... show that there is an offside position, the video assistant should continue to report. Even if it is only a centimetre. Offside is offside."

Daily Mail

Solskjaer slams Pogba's agent Raiola for criticising Man U

MANCHESTER - Manchester United Manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer believes Paul Pogba's agent was wrong to publicly disrespect the club and said he will discuss the situation with his midfielder.

Pogba's agent Mino Raiola told an Italian newspaper that he would no longer send his players to United - "a club out of touch with reality" - and that they would even ruin the career of "Diego Maradona and Pele" if they moved to Old Trafford now.

When asked if agents should be offering their opinions on clubs, Solskjaer said: "No. I can speak to Paul Pogba about it."

"I don't think I should talk to - or about - agents that talk about us."

"But Paul is our player and agents are hired by players - not the opposite way around. It is not agents' players, it is our players."

Solskjaer was also left unimpressed by the comments of former United striker Robin van Persie, who criticised the Norwegian's demeanour after United's 2-0 loss to Arsenal on Wednesday.

Van Persie, who wore the same shirt number as Solskjaer during their playing days at Old Trafford, won the Premier League title with Manchester United in 2012-13 season.

"I don't know Robin and Robin doesn't know me," Solskjaer said. "He probably doesn't have a right to criticise my management style and I won't change."

"He took my number 20 shirt and that's probably all he's going to take from me as well."

Reuters

'Everton hopeful of landing Rodriguez January loan deal'

LONDON - Everton are hopeful of securing a loan deal for James Rodriguez as Carlo Ancelotti looks to reunite with the misfiring Colombian for a third time.

The new Everton boss has a strong rapport with the Real Madrid playmaker, having worked with him at the Bernabeu as well as during his spell at Bayern Munich.

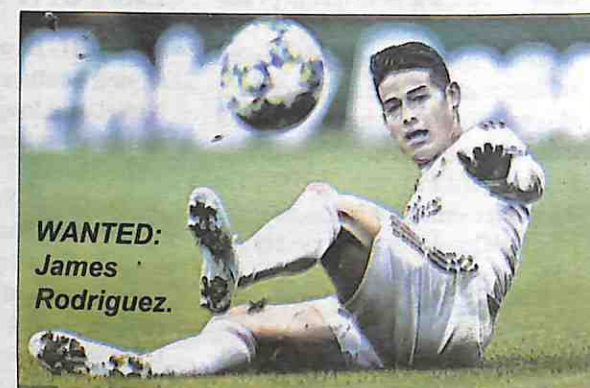
Since his return to the Spanish capital, the 28-year-old has failed to impress Madrid Manager Zinedine Zidane, who does not see the Colombian as part of his long term plans.

And, according to The Mirror,

Ancelotti has identified Rodriguez as the creative force that can help fire his side up the table.

Part of the thinking behind Everton's decision to appoint the veteran Italian was his strong reputation with football's top talent. Should the Toffees secure the services of Rodriguez, that £11.5 million-per-year investment in Ancelotti will look all the wiser.

The Italian had looked to sign Rodriguez last summer when he was in charge of Napoli. However, that deal failed to materialise and the



WANTED: James Rodriguez.

60-year-old left his post some months later.

Ancelotti has gotten off to a flying start to life since his appointment in December, winning two of his first three

Premier League games in charge, as well as breathing life into youngster Dominic Calvert-Lewin. The youngster has scored three goals in three games. *Sports Mail*



TUG-OF-WAR OVER MDANTSANE

LIMPOPO - Baroka FC Chairman Khurishi Mphahlele's efforts to hold onto star player Mduzuzi Mdantsane appear to be in vain.

Mphahlele told SunSport that he still has Mdantsane's clearance papers, which meant that the left-footed midfielder cannot make his debut for new club Cape Town City. However, both Mdantsane and City's owner John Comitis laughed off Mphahlele's allegations and mentioned that the player is in possession of his clearance. Said Mdantsane: "My chapter with Baroka is over and now I am with Cape Town City. I have my clearance papers and I am happy with the contribution I made at Baroka. I have nothing to prove to anyone. This is football, these things happen all the time." Comitis was perplexed regarding Mphahlele's utterances. "What he's talking about is a joke. I think he does not understand what he is saying. The boy came to us and said he wants to play for us. He is a good player and we are happy to have him here. He came with a clearance signed by the Baroka chairman. He went and fetched it himself. So I don't understand what he is talking about." *Daily Sun*

Hlompho shares childhood Bucs dream

JOHANNESBURG - Orlando Pirates may seem to be losing their touch this season but their football history keeps on inspiring rivals.

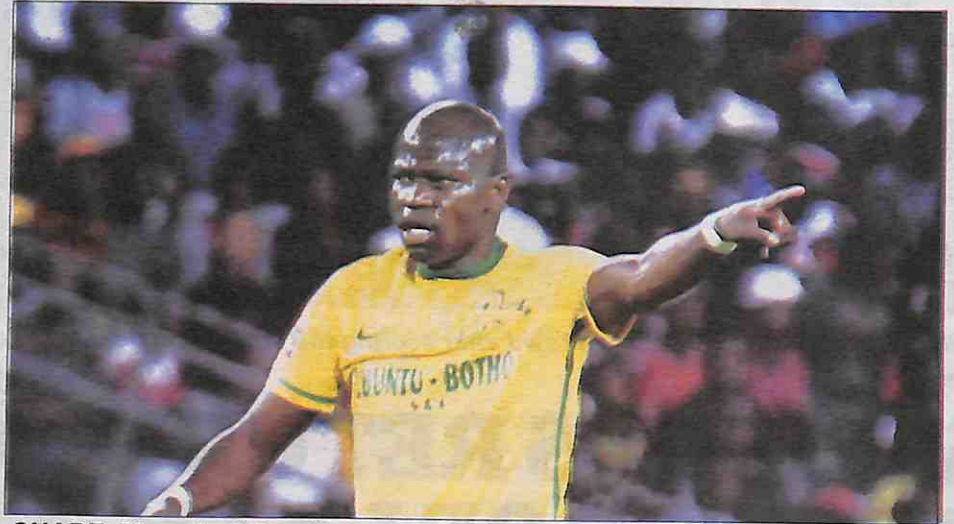
Mamelodi Sundowns captain Hlompho Kekana, who has collected almost every football club trophy, including six league titles and a CAF Champions League title, says Pirates' exploits on the continent remain a key source of inspiration for him to achieve more.

The 34-year-old evergreen midfielder has led his side through an unbeaten continental campaign this season, as they occupy top spot in their group alongside Wydad Casablanca, USM Algers and Petro de Luanda.

Despite their own success, Kekana says since his childhood he has always aspired to reach the heights of The Buccaneers, who just also have one Champions League title to their name but have reached two more continental finals in the previous decade.

"It's something that I've always wanted as a player. Obviously, there are tournaments when you were in a village, you would watch and admire, and at the same time you picture yourself playing in those tournaments," said Kekana.

"My story, I remember when I was young, I



SHARE: Mamelodi Sundowns captain Hlompho Kekana.

remember seeing Orlando Pirates lifting a trophy in Abidjan [Ivory Coast].

"Growing up, I saw myself lifting the same trophy that I saw Pirates lifting, and it was a dream come true [lifting the Champions League trophy in 2016].

"So, it's really for us to continue living these moments and trying to have the drive, and

believe that if the opportunity comes, we will grab it. But I love the moments I've created so far."

The Brazilians will be gunning for a second continental final this season as they look to secure their passage to the knockout stages by beating USMA at home on January 11.

Kick Off

FANS BLAME MOKWENA FOR PIRATES INCONSISTENCY

JOHANNESBURG - A New Year, but same old problems for Orlando Pirates as they dropped points in their maiden match in 2020.

The Buccaneers' record of being consistently inconsistent continues following their 1-1 draw with Bloemfontein Celtic in PSL match on Saturday. It has been a frustrating season for the Bucs faithful, who were hoping for a change of fortune after Josef Zinnbauer's arrival late last month. Goal discusses what went wrong for Pirates in Bloemfontein:

Pirates were hoping to build on their 3-1 win over Black Leopards as they ended 2019 in style in what was Zinnbauer's first match in charge of the team.

However, they let a lead slip in the closing stages of the match as the Soweto giants' season, which has been characterised by their inability to hold on to a lead, continues.

The four-time PSL champions are yet to win two matches in a row in the current campaign and the gap



Orlando Pirates FC.

between them and the top four teams on the league log keeps on widening.

Zinnbauer named a very offensive team with Ben Motshwari starting as a holding midfielder behind the attacking quintet of Fortune Makaringe, Vincent Pule, Augustine

Mulenga, Frank Mhango and Justin Shonga. Just like under Rhulani Mokwena's guidance, Pirates played an open game against Celtic, who were allowed to create their chances throughout the match and one could see that Siwelele were bound to score, which they eventually did.

It was a similar approach and style of play which was used by Mokwena during his reign as a caretaker coach, as Pirates struggled to hold on to a two-goal lead or more and as a result, they have won by two clear goals only twice this season.

Goal.com



PLEASED: SuperSport United coach Kaitano Tembo.

IT WASN'T PRETTY - TEMBO

PRETORIA - SuperSport United coach Kaitano Tembo was pleased with his charges handled Kaizer Chiefs duo Samir Nurkovic and Leonardo Castro on Saturday.

Matsatsantsa handed Amakhosi their second defeat of the season in an entertaining 2-1 success, with Bradley Grobler and Thamsanqa Gabuza getting the goals on the night.

"To be honest, it wasn't pretty. But you know we had to do what we had to do and today we had to play more without the ball," Tembo told SuperSport TV.

"Our pressing was very good and we were very dangerous on the break because we know their defence don't like to be turned.

"Also, on the sides we took advantage of the sides as well. Their full-backs like going forward so we had to go in there with speed as you can see with the first goal we scored even the second goal from the cross.

"I think we managed the game very well. We didn't open it up because if you open it up, then you give them especially their big strikers like Castro and Nurkovic the opportunity to play long balls so that they can play off the second ball but we didn't give them that today," he said.

Kick Off

VONK DISSECTS SA'S GOALKEEPING DILEMMA

JOHANNESBURG - A former South Africa national team goalkeeper has discussed reasons he thinks the country is no longer rich in goalkeeping talent as it used to be.

Regarded as one of the best goalkeepers to have ever kept goals for Bafana Bafana, Hans Vonk says the shortage in goalkeepers of international standard in the country right now is concerning.

"The goalkeeping department of Bafana Bafana? That's a difficult one at the moment hey," Vonk tells

KickOff.com, when asked about the situation.

"If you look at the goalkeepers that are playing at the top league in South Africa, there's not that many.

"At [Mamelodi] Sundowns, they have foreign goalkeepers; [Kaizer] Chiefs' number one is a foreigner [Daniel Akpeyi]; Pirates have the Frenchman [Joris Delle] and a local one [Wayne Sandilands].

"SuperSport [United] have Rowen [Williams], and that's the only one really, that's up to standard. At [Bidvest] Wits is Brandon Petersen,

who was with us [at Ajax Cape Town]. "So, if you look at that, it's concerning because you want your top goalkeepers playing for top clubs at the highest standards.

"It's even better if they play in Europe, but then they must play. [Darren] Keet hasn't really been playing has he? Ja, there's a bit of a concern, if you look at the goalkeeping department.

"There's not enough new talent coming through to fill up the space of Itumeleng Khune, Moeneeb Josephs, or the generation that came after

me - Andre Arendse, Rowen Fernandez, Calvin Marlin.

"Now there's a lack of new talent coming through. In my perspective, a goalkeeper is only really, really good when he is over 24-years-old, or around 26-years-old when he gets more experienced.

"You can see with Ronwen it shows that goalkeepers only reach their full potential when they get experienced." Vonk believes a possible solution to the shortage of up and coming shot-stoppers would be to have better development structures and goalkeeper academies.

Kick Off



Luis Suarez silences the home crowd after scoring the equalising goal on 50 minutes. (Daily Mail)

VISITORS RETURN TO THE TOP OF LA LIGA...

BARCELONA - If Wu Lei fever has been a little underwhelming at Espanyol since his high profile move last January, his dramatic equaliser two minutes from time might change that.

At the very least it will serve to upset his club's city rivals Barcelona's title challenge.

Chinese media and supporters mobbed the 28-year-old as he left the ground at midnight on Saturday. No one has scored more goals in the China Super League but levelling against Barcelona to salvage

a point in the Catalan derby might just top any of the goals he scored in his homeland.

Wu Lei had not been on the pitch from the start as Espanyol took the lead through David Lopez. But when Luis Suarez and Arturo Vidal inspired a Barcelona comeback, the side currently propping up La Liga turned to their talisman and he delivered in spectacular style.

Matias Vargas played the through ball and Wu Lei ran onto it before sending it past Neto on minute 88. It was the equaliser but it felt like

the winner for Espanyol who have not won at home all season and are favourites for the drop.

Vargas celebrated with friends watching from the dug-out. David Lopez, who had scored the first goal but been taken off injured hobbled along the touchline in celebration, while Wu Lei calmly took the acclaim. Barcelona had not deserved to take any more than a point from a game in which Lionel Messi was largely anonymous and Ivan Rakitic taken off at half time.

Daily Mail

'WHAT A WAY TO START THE YEAR'

BRISBANE - Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic argued with the umpire and scolded the crowd as the world number one survived a tough battle against fit-again South African Kevin Anderson in season opener the ATP Cup on Saturday.

Djokovic, who defeated Rafael Nadal in last year's Australian Open men's singles final for a record seventh title at Melbourne Park, had to dig deep in his 7-6(5) 7-6(6) win over Anderson to win the tie for Serbia in Brisbane.

The reigning Wimbledon champion soon lost his cool and got into a lengthy argument with chair umpire Mohamed Lahyani after being denied an opportunity to challenge.

On the next point, Djokovic furiously admonished the crowd for a disturbance during a rally.

Anderson, 33, was returning to the court for the first time since



Wimbledon, having played only five tournaments in 2019 because of elbow and knee injuries.

The runner-up at Wimbledon in 2018, when he lost the final to the Serb, fell to a 4-1 deficit in the opening set but fought back brilliantly to even things out.

"What a way to start the year," Djokovic said. "I started off extremely well, was 4-1 up and had some break points but then Kevin upped

his game.

"He was on fire tonight - I think the quality of tennis was quite high. I was very pleased with the way I kind of weathered the storm." World number two Nadal overcame a temporary blip on his way to victory at the £11.25 million tournament, which features 24 nations competing in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney over 10 days. *Daily Mail*

Anderson sets England record as Proteas bowled out

CAPE TOWN - James Anderson claimed a record-breaking 28th five-wicket haul as England took charge at lunch on day three of the second Test against South Africa at Newlands yesterday.

Anderson wrapped up the Proteas innings quickly at the start of the day, dismissing Kagiso Rabada first-ball to be on a hat trick, and later getting rid of Anrich Nortje for four

to end the hosts' innings on 223 - handing the visitors a 46-run lead on the first innings.

Equalled

All-rounder Ben Stokes also equalled the mark for most catches in an innings by a fielder other than the wicket-keeper with five.

The 37-year-old Anderson went past Sir Ian Botham to go to the top of England's list for most five-wick-

et hauls in the longest format of the game, while also moving up to seventh on the world standings.

England ended the morning on 52/1 off 19 overs, which gives them a healthy 98-run lead at the halfway point of the match. They started off cautiously, with opener Zak Crawley being struck on his helmet twice by Rabada.

IOL Sport

ADEBAYOR LINKED WITH SHOCK EPL RETURN

LONDON - After leaving Turkey last month, former Arsenal and Real Madrid striker Emmanuel Adebayor has been linked with a shock return to the Premier League.

According to the Mirror, Aston Villa could make a move for the Togolese forward in the January transfer window in an attempt to bolster their attack.

Adebayor is a free agent after parting ways with Turkish Super Lig outfit Kayserispor last month and now could return to the league where he made a name for himself.

The Togolese's presence would be beneficial for Villa who are set to be without first choice striker Wesley, who looks set to miss the remainder of the season after damaging ligaments in his knee.

The report added that the 35-year-old would help Villa remain within the Financial Fair Play rules as he is a free agent. Adebayor featured for the likes of Arsenal, Manchester City, Tottenham Hotspur and Crystal Palace before he left for Turkey. *Kick Off*



THE RETURN: Emmanuel Adebayor.

Los Angeles Clippers out fox Memphis Grizzlies

LOS ANGELES - Jae Crowder was making shots early, putting him in a rhythm that carried throughout the game.

His Memphis team-mates followed right along and took advantage of Los Angeles star Paul George's absence to rout the Clippers 140-114 on Saturday.

The Grizzlies never scored less than 25 points in each quarter.

"We controlled the tempo and got off to a big first quarter and scored 40 points," said Crowder, who scored 27 points. "We've had big leads this year and lost them, so we stayed aggressive and continued to contest the rim."

Jaren Jackson Jr. added 24 points, and Ja Morant and Dillon Brooks had 22 points each to help Memphis improve to 7-10 on the road with its highest scoring game of the season. "We started off great, got stops

when we needed them and nearly played a complete 48 minutes," Grizzlies coach Taylor Jenkins said. "We're going to enjoy this one. The guys were (mad) how we let a big lead get away in Sacramento the other night and ended up losing that game."

Montrezl Harrell led the Clippers with 28 points. Kawhi Leonard and Lou Williams added 24 points each. The team appeared out of sorts from the start without George. He sat out with left hamstring tightness and Los Angeles clearly missed his defence.

The usually stoic Leonard complained to the referees, who hit him with a technical after the half-time buzzer. Coach Doc Rivers stayed on court discussing it and was unhappy about other calls in the game.

"I thought he had gotten fouled a couple times," Rivers said about non-calls on Leonard. *Sports Mail*

Cavendish refusing to give up on the Olympics

LONDON - Mark Cavendish is doing all he can to keep his Olympic dream alive as he bids to secure a spot in the final UCI track cycling World Cup event in Canada this month.

British Cycling have yet to name their team for the event in Milton on January 26, and there is a risk that the 34-year-old will be overlooked.

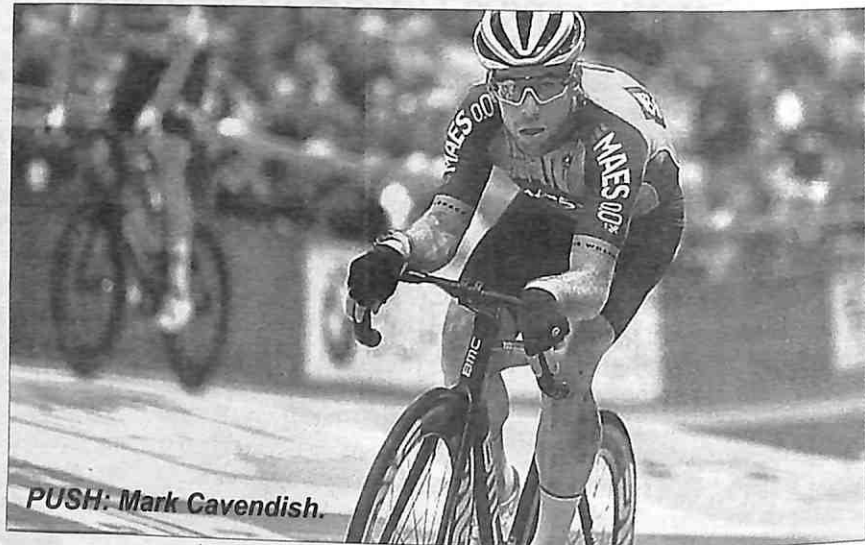
He is no longer on lottery funding and has been forced to fund his own attempt at one more crack at Olympic glory in Tokyo this summer. Cavendish is still seeking his first Olympic gold after claiming silver in the omnium in Rio four years ago. He is desperate to race in the madison at the 2020 Games, which has not featured at the Olympics

since Beijing in 2008, and in which he is a three-time world champion.

Cavendish reached the 250-point target needed to qualify at the Track Cycling Challenge in Switzerland and now only needs to compete in Canada at the end of this month.

He is in good shape on the back of a successful London SixDay on the track where he outsprinted both Caleb Ewan and Elia Viviani. But last month British Cycling's head coach Iain Dyer suggested Cavendish's selection was by no means a certainty.

"There are people there that have had their hand in the air," he said. "The door is open but it's extremely challenging to carve out an opportunity." *Daily Star*



PUSH: Mark Cavendish.

Hudson-Odoi stars in Blues' FA Cup third-round win

LONDON - Callum Hudson-Odoi was Chelsea's star as Frank Lampard's side eased into the FA Cup fourth round with a 2-0 home defeat of Nottingham Forest.

Hudson-Odoi's sixth-minute opener at Stamford Bridge yesterday got the Blues off to a flyer and Ross Barkley doubled their lead before

half-time.

It was a welcome win for Chelsea, who had lost three of their past four home games in the Premier League. Second-tier side Forest, who were much changed, were unable to lay a glove on the eight-time winners.

Chelsea, who also knocked Forest out at this stage last year, opened the

scoring early on.

Quick build-up play led to Hudson-Odoi being fed on the right, with the England international cutting inside and firing a low finish through the legs of Yuri Ribeiro to beat Jordan Smith. The Championship side were awarded a penalty in the 22nd minute when Alex Mighten was bundled

over by Fikayo Tomori, but a VAR check showed the lively 17-year-old was offside.

Chelsea then doubled their lead, Smith parrying Hudson-Odoi's powerful drive, with Barkley arriving late to tuck home the rebound at the back post. A third almost arrived on the hour-mark, Smith making a great save to tip Barkley's header onto the post after Hudson-Odoi opened up

the Forest defence once more.

Ryan Yates then had a close-range header ruled out for offside at the other end. Teenage defender Tariq Lamprey was given another cameo off the bench in the closing stages, when Chelsea almost got a third through Hudson-Odoi only for Smith to push his try wide with the final act of the game.

Goal

LIFE'S A BEACH FOR MOURINHO IN FA CUP BALL COMPLAINT

LONDON - Jose Mourinho claimed Tottenham's stars were unsettled during their 1-1 draw against Middlesbrough because the FA Cup ball was too light.

Mourinho's side needed a second half equaliser from Lucas Moura to earn a third round replay after falling behind to Ashley Fletcher's strike at the Riverside Stadium.

But Mourinho suggested the different weight of the FA Cup ball compared to the Premier League one made it difficult for his team to impose themselves on their second tier opponents.

"I think this ball is beach ball. It's too light. I don't think it helps the players. But that's not an excuse," he told BT Sport.

Mourinho wasn't happy with Middlesbrough's goal either, suggesting it would have been ruled out by VAR if the system had been in use.



COMPLAINT: Jose Mourinho.

Only Premier League stadiums have VAR, so Championship Middlesbrough were operating without the controversial reviews.

"Yeah because the Middlesbrough

goal is offside. VAR would give (the offside decision)," Mourinho said.

"The referee was not some guy in an office 200 miles away (today)." *Daily Mail*

DUTCH COACH OFF THE MARK AS CT CITY SINK BAROKA

CAPE TOWN - Cape Town City registered their first win and goal under coach Jan Olde Riekerink after defeating Baroka FC yesterday afternoon.

The Citizens made four changes from their loss to Bidvest Wits, as Kermit Erasmus and Thamsanqa Mkhize returned to boost the side alongside a rare start for Roland Putsche and Ioannis-Konstantinos Poutoridis.

Meanwhile, Bakgaga could not get a work permit in time for new coach Dylan Kerr, who watched on from the stands as assistant coach Matsemela Thoka took charge for the day.

Baroka were lucky not to be one man down after just 12 minutes when Sbonelo Ngubane made a dangerous two-footed tackle on Craig Martin, but the defender was only shown a yellow card.

Thoka's charges were absorbing the pressure, hoping for chances on counter-attacks and they nearly broke the deadlock in first-half stoppage time as Tshidiso Patjie fired wide of the mark with only

goalkeeper Peter Leeuwenburgh to beat. The hosts had their best chance of the match after the break after Bradley Ralani went clear on the left side of the box but he could not get a strike at goal, after being put off by Kgoetyane who made a quick recovery just after the hour mark.

Goal

However, the Citizens finally scored their first goal under Riekerink three minutes later after Mkhize powered home a header at the back post from Chris David's quick quality cross.

Mpho Makola nearly had an immediate impact after coming as he teed up Thabo Nodada to go clear in the box but the latter hit the post from close range after his initial shot was saved by Baroka shot-stopper Elvis Chipezeze.

City were under threat on counter-attacks as second-half substitute Ranga Chivaviro went through on the left side of the box but he struck a low shot wide of the mark as the home side held on for the win.

Soccer Laduma

Jones stunner sees young Reds past rivals

LONDON - Curtis Jones netted an outstanding first senior goal to carry a youthful Liverpool side to an impressive 1-0 Merseyside derby victory over Everton in the third round of the FA Cup at Anfield.

Top of the Premier League and through to the last 16 of the Champions League, Liverpool appeared to be prioritising their other commitments until Jones came to the fore.

Jürgen Klopp included new signing Takumi Minamino among a clutch of established names at Anfield but largely put his faith in young stars, who held their own admirably against an experienced Everton outfit. Adrian was required to make a string of saves in the first half, before the hosts took control of the second period and scored in stunning fashion through 18-year-old Jones with 19 minutes to play, extending Everton's wait for a win at their bitter rivals that stretches back to 1999.

Carlo Ancelotti's side should have led early on but Dominic Calvert-Lewin, Mason Holgate and Richarlison all shot too close to Adrian, who reacted instinctively on each occa-

sion, while stand-in Liverpool captain James Milner was injured in attempting to prevent the first opening.

Although Jordan Pickford dived into a stunning, stretching save from Divock Origi shortly before the break, the striker appeared to be stood in an offside position, meaning the VAR would have intervened.

Liverpool stayed patient in pursuit of an opener following a strong start to the second period and their moment came when Jones traded passes with Origi 20 yards from goal and whipped a sensational, curling effort over the scrambling Pickford. The England goalkeeper, who had saved from Origi moments earlier, was quickly worked again by substitute Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain as

Everton struggled to find a response.

Inevitable late pressure followed, but Liverpool held firm for a win that dealt a blow to Ancelotti in the early stages of his Everton tenure.

Daily Mail



Highlands hands new Leopards coach losing start

TEMBISA - Cavin Johnson began his reign at Black Leopards with a 2-1 defeat to Highlands Park in yesterday afternoon's ABSA Premiership action.

The Lions of the North made only two alterations from their win over Golden Arrows, as Reneilwe Letsholonyane and Mokete Mogaila got starting berths at the expense of Limbikani Mzava and Wayde Jooste. Meanwhile, Johnson also made two changes, with Tshwarelo Bereng and Lifa Hlongwane starting ahead of Thuso Phala and Themba Ndlovu.

After a quiet opening, Owen Da Gama's charges should have been ahead in the 25th minute after Peter Shalulile raced clear on goal and rounded Lidoda Duvha goalkeeper Jonas Mendes but the Namibian hit the crossbar with the net gaping.

Three minutes later, Mvala eventually broke the deadlock for Highlands with a deflected shot from the left side of the box after Leopards failed to clear their lines from a corner.

Johnson's troops almost pulled a goal back in the 31st minute after Hlongwane's run on the left side of

the box caught Highlands shot-stopper out of his goal but the shot was cleared off the line by Mvala. However, the hosts doubled their lead five minutes later after Mogaila pounced on rebound from Letsholonyane's saved effort inside the box to fire into the far corner. Da Gama was already closing shop after the hour mark, as he introduced defensive midfielder Mlungisi Mbunjana for Letsholonyane while Johnson threw on Mogakolodi Ngele in place of Hlongwane as the visitors went in search of a goal.

Kick-Off



MTN Premier League 2019/20



Mbabane Highlanders striker Josep Lekata controls the ball in front of Moneni Pirates defender Wenzile Lushaba. This was during the two teams' MTN Premier League clash that ended in a goalless draw yesterday at Somhlolo National Stadium. (Pics: Jongile Xuba)



Highlander's midfielder Lindani Matsenjwa making a pass in front of Pirates left back Mthunzi Motsa.



Highlanders goalkeeper Khanyakwezwe Shabalala making a save.



Highlanders midfielder Lindani Matsenjwa tackles Pirates player Xolani Ngwenya.



Pirates defender Thabo Vilakati clears the ball in front of Mphucuko Dlamini.



One of the missed scoring chances for Highlanders.



Pirates' Fabrice Mopina heads the ball.



Pirates players taking instructions from their technical bench.



Highlanders coach Thabo 'Koki' Vilakati issuing instructions to his charges.



MTN Premier League 2019/20

Pigg's Peak Black Swallows vs Manzini Wanderers



BACK OF THE NET: Pigg's Peak Black Swallows goalkeeper Friday Lukhele looks on as the ball hits the back of the net during their match against Manzini Wanderers at Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday. Wanderers won 4 – 2. (Pics: Jongile Xuba)



CONTROL: Pigg's Peak Black Swallows striker Allen Mabuza controls the ball while Pirate's Menzi Gamedze closes in.



TUSSLE: Pigg's Peak Black Swallows captain Mbuso Mabuza and Manzini Wanderers captain Menzi Gamedze tussle for the ball.



NICE MOVE: Manzini Wanderers captain Menzi Gamedze and Mike Dombo all smiles after the team's third goal.



GOING PAST: Wanderers defender Sifiso Maseko dribbles past the opposition players.



SKILL: Mike Dombo scoops the ball away from Pigg's Peak Black Swallows' Sikhanyiso Shabangu.



JOVIAL: Manzini Wanderers supporters cheer the team's players on.



FLICK: Pigg's Peak Black Swallows goalkeeper Friday Lukhele flicks the ball over the bar.



MAWESELI: Wanderers players celebrate with their fans in song after the final whistle.

FOOTBALL TALK

All your latest WORLD FOOTBALL News

● Manchester United want Leicester City's James Maddison, 23, and are prepared to offer the Foxes £45m plus fellow England midfielder Jesse Lingard, 27. (*Sunday Mirror*)

● West Ham United will attempt to challenge Manchester City for Napoli's Senegal defender Kalidou Koulibaly, 28. (*Sunday Express*)

● The Hammers have scheduled a meeting with Benfica next week over the loan signing of Portugal midfielder Gedson Fernandes, 20. (*Record, via Daily Star Sunday*)

● Inter Milan want to sign Tottenham Hotspur midfielder Christian Eriksen for £20m this month, despite the 27-year-old Denmark international being available on a free transfer at the end of the season. (*Sun on Sunday*)

● Manchester United have told Inter boss Antonio Conte they want Argentina striker Lautaro Martinez, 22, before allowing their France midfielder Paul Pogba, 26, to move to the San Siro. (*Sunday Mirror*)

● What happened in the FA Cup on Saturday? Tranmere Connor Jennings, Man City Sergio Aguero. *A round-up of all Saturday's FA Cup action*

● Juventus have made contact with the representatives of Chelsea's Brazilian left-sided defender Emerson, 25. (*Calciomercato*)

● Everton boss Carlo Ancelotti wants to bring Real Madrid's Colombia playmaker James Rodriguez, 28, to Goodison Park on loan. (*Sunday Mirror*)

● Tottenham are hoping to make permanent the loan of Argentina midfielder Giovanni Lo Celso, 23, from Real Betis in a £27m deal in the January transfer window. (*Sun*)

● Crystal Palace have targeted a loan deal for Everton and Turkey striker Cenk Tosun, 28. (*Mail on Sunday*)

● Arsenal and Germany defender Shkodran Mustafi, 27, could leave the Premier League club at the end of the month. (*Sunday Mirror*)

● Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers would not confirm or deny reports of a move for Juventus and Turkey defender Merih Demiral, 21. (*Mail on Sunday*)

● Burnley boss Sean Dyche says it is "highly unlikely" that senior players will leave the club during the January transfer window. (*Lancashire Telegraph*)

● Tottenham hope Republic of Ireland striker Troy Parrott, 17, will commit his future to the club by signing a new long-term contract next month. (*Evening Standard*)

● Leeds United have moved ahead of Nottingham Forest in the race to sign English striker Che Adams, 23, on loan from Southampton. (*Football Insider*)

Nomads Junior Golf Competition returns tomorrow

BY JONGILE XUBA

GOLF - THE first edition of this year's Nomads Junior Golf Competition kicks off tomorrow.

This was revealed by Eswatini Golf Union development coach Meshack Zwane, who said the competition would be played at Mbabane Golf Club.

"We are pleased to announce our first tournament of year that will be played at Mbabane Golf Club.

Registration will start at 7:30am and first tee off is 8 am.

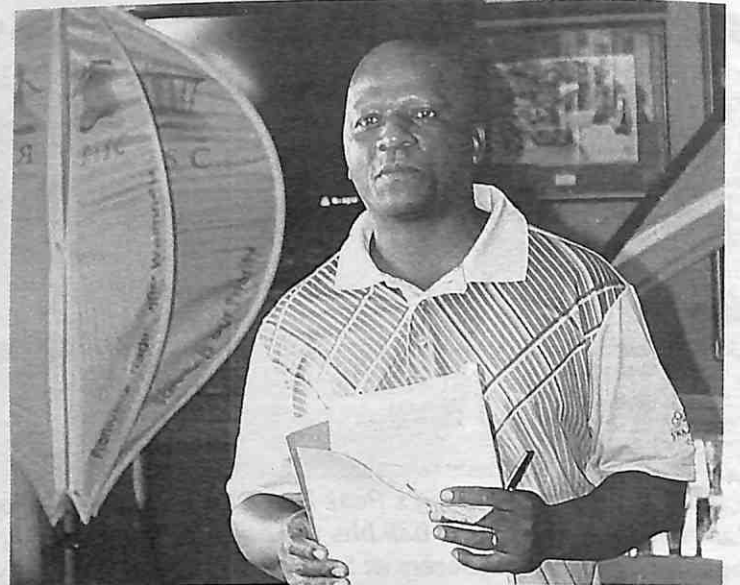
"We hope to see all our future champions there and hope they all had a good crossover," he said.

This year's competition will see last year's B Division top three

finishers Sisekelo Masuku, Naye Mkhali and Mphilo graduating to the A Division. Three A Division players Phayo Dhlamini, Qiniso Mkhonta and Mfundo Nxumalo all moved up to senior level.

The junior's golf tournament is supported by Nomads Golf Club and last year was sponsored by FNB Eswatini, Eswatini Sugar Association, A D Enterprises, House on Fire, Century Fashions and Galito's, to name a few.

The outstanding eight junior golfers from this competition stand a chance to be selected to the 2020 Eswatini Junior national team to represent the country in the 2020 All Africa Junior Championships



PLEASED: Eswatini Golf Union development coach Meshack Zwane.

'Siziba' beat Mnyakeni in floating Trophy Challenge

BY MELUSI MLOTSI

POOL - SEASONED pool player, Zweli 'Siziba' Dlamini, announced his return in the game by beating Dumsani Mnyakeni 9-5 during the ongoing Floating Trophy Challenge on Saturday at the Mbabane Express Car Wash.

Dlamini walked away with E1 000 plus a trophy after being crowned champion.

The two players were once locked in 2-2 in the early stages of the match. However, 'Siziba' showed his experience and led 6-2 at interval.

The seasoned pool player eventually won the match 9-5, much to the joy of his fans.

Mbabane Express Car Wash coordinator Sicelo Mndzebele congratulated the winner and thanked the pool lovers for coming in their numbers.

"Both players displayed good performance. Congratulations to 'Siziba', he deserves the trophy after he had been out of action for a long time.

"I would also like to take this opportunity to thank pool lovers for packing the Pool Room. Continue supporting the sport," he said.

Mndzebele added that the games would continue on Saturday where the Double Trophy Challenge would also take place.

The pair of Flag Nxumalo and Eddie Mkhonta are the defending champions. This was after they defeated Dodge Matsebula and Siyabonga Dlamini recently.



Pool player Zweli 'Siziba' Dlamini displaying his trophy after winning the Floating Trophy Pool challenge on Saturday. (courtesy pic)

Mbabane Cheetahs Rugby hosting trials for ladies

BY COLISILE SACOLO

RUGBY - MBABANE Cheetahs are hosting trials for ladies who are interested in playing rugby sport as they look to recruit more women into the sport next Saturday at the Prince of Wales Sports Ground.

This was revealed by Mbabane Cheetah's Manager Naomi du-Pont, who said the session was aimed at scouting players for the national squad.

"We are inviting women players to attend the trials next weekend as we are looking for players to form part of the women national team. We are in the process of assembling a ladies team that will face Mozambique in the international tournament next month.

"We will announce the details of the international tournament after the local trials," she said. Du-Pont further stated the female players stood a chance of being recruited by local teams that would be present during the trials. "These trials will be attended by local clubs, who are also looking to have female players in their clubs. Therefore, we call upon every female player who is passionate about rugby to join us next weekend. Any interested individual can contact me at 78239670 for further details," she added.

Hlatikulu residents want more Zithande boot camps

BY JONGILE XUBA

ATHLETICS - RESIDENTS of Hlatikulu gave a resounding response to their first ever Mkhaba Phuma Kimi Boot camp on Saturday.

This was confirmed by Zithande Athletics Club coach Nsizwa Thwala, who said the residents came in their numbers to be part of the boot camp.

"I'm originally from Hlatikulu meaning I am always at home during the festive.

"This was the perfect place to



hold the last part of our Woza Festive Programme. "We had a

Some of the Hlatikulu residents who were part of the Mkhaba Phuma Kimi Bootcamp held by Zithande Athletics Club on Saturday. (Courtesy pic)

one and a half hour Mkhaba Phuma Kimi training and the residents loved everything about it because they only got to read about it in the newspapers..

"Thwala further revealed that the residents were interested in forming a club to help them keep fit and healthy.

"Some of the residents said they want more programmes like this hence they want to form a club just like the Hlatikulu running group."

The coach said he would now focus his energy on preparing for the Comrades Marathon Training camp which starts this weekend.

IT WAS NOT AN EASY GAME - 'NYANGA'

BY NOMALUNGELO PHIRI

SOCCER - MANZINI Wanderers head coach Nyanga 'Crooks' Hlophe says their game against relegation threatened side Pigg's Peak Black Swallows was very tough as both teams are fighting relegation.

Hlophe was speaking after watching his side beat the newcomers 4-2 in an MTN Premier League match played at Somhlolo National Stadium yesterday. The former Mbabane Swallows coach stated that lack of communication among his players nearly cost them maximum points against the former First Division cham-

pions. "The win does not mean it was an easy game but the result is a sign of progress in the team considering the challenges which we are currently facing.

I would like to thank my players for working hard and I hope they will continue pushing," he said.

Meanwhile, Pigg's Peak Black Swallows mentor Alou Badara said they would soon start working on their mistakes as they dropped another three points on the day. "It won't be easy to beat relegation but we will fight until the end.

The two goals show that the team can do better and I am pleased with the attitude of my players," he said.



NOT EASY: Manzini Wanderers head coach Nyanga 'Crooks' Hlophe.

Penuel predicts bright future for US-based star

BY JONGILE XUBA

SOCCER - EXPERIENCED development coach Penuel Malinga said he expects Gregory Mamba, who is currently playing his trade for the LCA Eagles in Layton, Utah in America, to become a future national team star.

Interviewed recently, the coach of the Manzini School of Excellence, a soccer academy, said having worked with the young star early in his development, he was happy to see him fulfil his potential overseas. LCA Eagles is a varsity soccer team.

"It is great to see Greg make the giant leap in his career as seen in the past years. We wish him all the best as he pursues his career and I expect to see him donning the Sihlangu jersey in the near future," he said.

Worked

Malinga, who worked for over three years with Manzini Sundowns where he also developed the likes of Justice Figuareido and Lwethu Simelane, said Eswatini's footballing future and improvement still remains youth development.

"Youth football development remains the only hope for the future of the game on the field.

We need to have more visionary leaders and not people who are only interested in holding positions.

If we had more players like Greg getting the chance to play and study abroad we can surely achieve a lot," he said.

Mamba, who was also recently interviewed by this publication, would soon be completing his studies and is expecting offers from Major League Soccer (MLS) teams later this year.



KENNETH NKAMBULE IS THE MUG WINNER FOR JANUARY

BY COLISILE SACOLO

GOLF- MBABANE Golf Club captain Kenneth Nkambule was on Saturday crowned the January Eswatini Royal Insurance Corporation monthly Mug winner for January.

Nkambule secured a total of 71 nett points ahead of Valentine Maziya and Siboniso Mkhwanazi.

There were two mugs for grabs for net winner and gross winner and the mug net winner can only be won by Mbabane Golf Club members whilst the gross mug can be won by anyone.

Meanwhile, Nelisiwe Mathabela won the ladies section and Mbabane Golf Club Ladies captain Fisiwe Vilane was the runner-up.

The competition attracted a field of 71 golfers. Captain Nkambule said he was very impressed by the number of participants, adding it was an extra-ordinary big field which is good for the club and for by the ESRIC band as well.

ESRIC Assistant General Manager Mandla Dlamini congratulated all the golfers for doing well.

"We appreciate your support in the past year 2019 even though we were unable to reach our target due to the economic situation of the country. We will continue to support Mbabane Golf Club," he said.

Overall Results:		
1.	Valentine Maziya net	70
2.	Kenneth Nkambule mug winner	71
3.	Siboniso Mkhwanzi Gross winner	72
4.	Machawe Maziya	71
5.	Dumisa Gama	72
6.	Mongi Dlamini	72
7.	Sifiso Zubuko	72
8.	Bongani Shabangu	72
9.	John Fakudze	73
10.	Mduduzi Maphalala	73

Ladies Section:		
1.	Nelisiwe Mathabela	76
2.	Fisiwe Vilane	80

Novelist:
Mens Longest drive : Teddy Vilakati
Ladies Longest drive : Nelisiwe Mathabela
Nearest pin
 2/11 : Bambo Kunene
 8/17 : Teddy Vilakati
 9/18 : Bongani Shabangu

Seven Dreams thrash Umbelebele

BY COLISILE SACOLO

Umbelebele (1)2
 Seven Dreams (1)6

SOCCER - SEVEN Dreams thrashed Umbelebele Cosmos 6-2 during an MTN National First Division league match played on Saturday afternoon at Prince of Wales Ground.

Umbelebele looked determined to win the match as they were all over the opposition from the first whistle but Seven Dreams moments later took control of the proceedings.

The visitors were first to open the scorers chart eight minutes into the match through a strike from their captain Sandile Dlamini.

It became an entertaining affair as both sides came hard at each

other with Umbelebele having an upper hand and they levelled matters in the 37 minute through a Fakazi Makhubu effort which also ensured a 1-1 all stalemate going into the half-time break.

Seven Dreams came back strong in the second half and they showed more aggression which resulted to a second goal from Sandile in the 56 minute.

Completed

The former Royal Leopard and Mbabane City striker completed his hat-trick two minutes later with a sublime effort. The third goal seemed to be the right tonic for Seven Dreams as they started enjoying the lion's share of possession as Umbelebele were chasing shadows. Umbelebele continued to search for another goal but seven Dreams thwarted every-

thing thrown at them and the opposition's captain Sandile demoralised them with his fourth goal of the afternoon in the 78th minute. Seven Dreams midfielder Bandzile Mdluli netted the fifth goal for the visitors in the 81 minute and he was joined his captain Sandile two minutes later as they completed a half dozen over the former Premier League side. Umbelebele were able to absorb the pressure as they eventually started to play with purpose and they eventually scored their second goal two minutes before fulltime via the boot of Sikhumbuzo Dlamini. Meanwhile, Vovovo smacked Illovo with a score of 1-0 in another match also played at the same venue, courtesy of a Menzi Shabangu first half goal.

We are now adapting in Premier League - 'King Clay'

BY JONGILE XUBA

SOCCER - MILLING Hotspurs coach Clement 'King Clay' Mdluli said his team is finally adapting to MTN Premier League life after they handed Malanti Chiefs a 1-0 to end their eight-game winless streak.

The teams were playing at Somhlolo National Stadium on Saturday afternoon and the Premier League rookies managed to hold out for their third win of the season in what was a very close game.

Mdluli said he was happy to have won a close match, especially given that the team had not trained during the holidays break. He said the

team was showing signs of adapting to the league. "We didn't really have training preparations but we still managed to get a close game against a very attacking team. The win means we are starting to adapt to the elite league and I am happy with our performance," he said.

Meanwhile, Malanti Chiefs coach Christopher Tembo was not happy with the result saying drastic changes needed to be made.

"We need to restructure the team in order for us to improve our position. After six games of not winning anything, it may be time to look at getting some new players," he said.

Coming to the match, the former Manzini Sundowns and Mbabane



ADAPTING: Milling Hotspurs players line up for a team picture before their MTN Premier League match against Malanti Chiefs at Somhlolo National Stadium on Saturday. (Pic: Jongile Xuba)

Swallows coach said the players were careless in their approach, hence they were punished for their mistakes.

CHANGE OF VENUE FOR INGWENYAMA CUP LAST 16 DRAW

BY SIBUSISO MASILELA

SOCCER - THE Ingwenyama Cup last 16 draw will now take place at the Sigwaca House instead of the initial venue, the Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accidents Fund board room.

This was revealed by the tourna-

ment's Public Relations Officer Nkosilenhle Masuku who said the draw would start at 10am.

"The venue for the draw has been changed but it will still start at 10am.

Upon

We call upon teams' representatives to keep time. We are going to stage the last 16 matches this com-

ing weekend," he said.

The full list of the last 16 teams

1. Manzini Wanderers
2. Mbabane Highlanders
3. Mbabane Swallows
4. Young Buffaloes
5. Royal Leopard
6. Sea Birds
7. Mhlume Peacemakers

8. Moneni Pirates
9. Denver Sundowns
10. Green Mamba
11. Tambankulu Callies
12. Illovo
13. Madlenya
14. Seven Dreams
15. Malanti Chiefs
16. Vovovo

LOG										
Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS		
Young Buffaloes	14	11	2	1	39	6	33	35		
Mbabane Swallows	14	9	4	1	24	10	14	31		
Royal Leopards	14	8	4	2	19	10	9	28		
Moneni Pirates	14	7	4	3	19	12	7	25		
Green Mamba	14	6	3	5	20	11	9	20		
Mbabane Highlanders	14	3	2	9	12	17	-5	11		
Denver Sundowns	14	4	4	6	13	17	-4	16		
Manzini Wanderers	14	4	4	6	17	24	-7	17		
Miling Hotsprings	14	3	3	8	12	18	-6	15		
Tambuli	14	2	3	9	16	25	-9	15		
Peacemakers	14	3	3	8	13	22	-9	13		
Sea Birds	14	3	3	8	13	22	-9	13		
Black Swallows	14	3	1	10	15	33	-18	10		
Malanti Chiefs	14	3	0	11	9	23	-14	9		

MTN NATIONAL FIRST DIVISION

Citizens 0-1 Tlozi
Rangers 1-1 Callies

Eswatini Observer Sports

Your Dedicated Sports Feed

Monday January 6, 2020



Bull, Pirates settle for another stalemate

BY MELUSI MLOTSHA

M.Highlanders.....(0)0
Moneni Pirates.....(0)0

SOCCER- CAPITAL city giants Mbabane Highlanders and Moneni Pirates once again shared the spoils in the MTN Premier League after playing to a goalless draw yesterday afternoon at Somhlolo National Stadium.

The two sides couldn't be separated on the day as they settled for a 1-all draw during the first round and again yesterday there were no goals from either side.

It was, a ninth draw for the 'Black Bull' who remained in position six in the log standings whilst the 'Sea Robbers'

maintained their fourth spot.

Highlanders, who were without their key players in defenders Peter Dlamini, Vukile Khumalo and Menzi Mamba due to suspensions and injuries, created better chances in the first half which they failed to utilise.

Highlander's young striker Siboniso Lukhele's shot inside the box was parried for a fruitless corner kick in the six minutes.

A moment later, Mbabane Highlanders goalkeeper Khanyakwezwe Shabalala was called to make a brilliant save from a Lwazi 'Shumi' Mamba shot inside the box in the 20 minutes. This was after Lizwe Zwane broke free from the right flank before he delivered a quality cross.

The home side's winger Mphucuko Dlamini's shot was parried for a fruit-

less corner kick by the Moneni Pirates goalkeeper Bhekisisa Dlamini in the half hour mark.

The pacey winger Dlamini also made another attempt at goal in the 40 minute that was cleared for a corner kick by the Pirates defence. The 'Buccaneers' striker Fabrice Mopina saw his shot went wide towards the end of the first half.

The match went for the break with both sides locked in a stalemate.

The second half saw both sides continue searching for a goal.

A Lindani 'Rio' Matsenjwa's well taken shot at the edge of the box hit the woodwork in the 50 minute.

Thereafter, Pirates launched some incisive attacks but could not break the defence well marshalled by Jimmoh Moses. In the 56 minute, Highlanders

coach, Thabo 'Koki' Vilakati introduced South Africa born striker Josef Lekata for Siboniso Lukhele.

In the 58 minute, Lekata's header went inches wide after Sabelo Gamedze's corner kick.

Khanyakwezwe, who had a good game, made another brilliant save from Fabrice Mopina after the hour mark.

Both teams made some changes in the 69th minute.

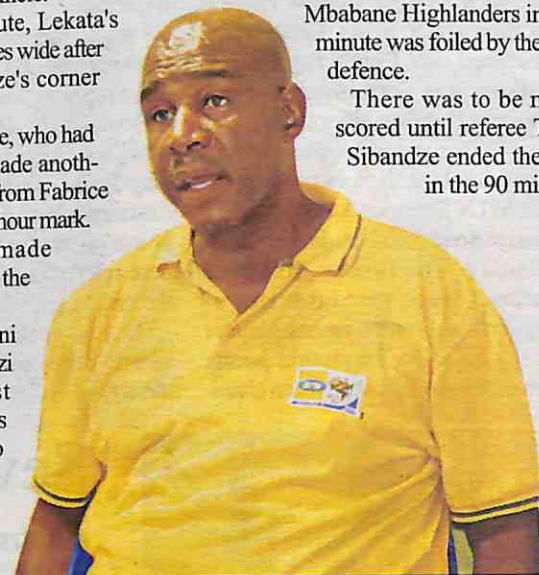
Melusi Dlamini came in for Menzi Sithole whilst Moneni Pirates introduced Sifiso Mdluli for Lwazi 'Shumi' Mamba.

The changes had little effect

as both teams failed to find that elusive goal.

A quick counter-attack from Mbabane Highlanders in the 81 minute was foiled by the Pirates defence.

There was to be no goal scored until referee Thulani Sibandze ended the match in the 90 minute.



WANDERERS THUMP BLACK SWALLOWS

- Hub giants eased off relegation worries with resounding victory
- Jump to top eight bracket



BY NOMALUNGELO PHIRI

Black Swallows.....(0)2
Manzini Wanderers.....(4)4

SOCCER - HUB giants Manzini Wanderers shrugged off their recent administrative woes with a resounding 4-2 victory over Pigg's Peak Black Swallows yesterday at the Somhlolo National Stadium.

The 'Weslians' ensured a bright start into the second round by outfoxing the struggling newcomers to jump into the top eight bracket of the MTN Premier League with 16 points.

Wanderers were just too good for the home side as they showed their intention to win right from referee Mbongeni Shongwe's

first whistle.

The maroon and white ensemble displayed the upper hand as early as the seven minute into the first half when Mancoba 'Spider' Maseko gave them a lead with a sublime strike inside the box.

The 'Weslians' doubled the scoreline before the half hour mark via the head of their crowd pleaser Mike Dombo. The Congolese winger Dombo made it three six minutes later with a clinical finish, much to the delight of their vocal supporters. The game went to the breather with Wanderers leading 4-0 after Dombo completed his hattrick before the half time break. On the resumption of play, Swallows turned the tables with Luaba Mbikayi finding the back of the net in the hour mark. The relegation threatened Black Swallows displayed determination three minutes after their opener when Mfundo Mkhabela netted their second goal with a header inside the box. The home side tried making ends meet, however, it was too late as Wanderers held on until fulltime to record their fourth win of the season.

'Senior official interfering at Bull'

BY MELUSI MLOTSHA

SOCCER- MBABANE Highlanders head coach Thabo 'Koki' Vilakati has complained that a senior official is allegedly interfering in the team's technical affairs.

The outspoken gaffer made the startling revelation in a post-match interview after his side played to a goalless draw with Moneni Pirates. "There is this senior official who always interferes with my duties and I will soon expose him. Highlanders is my home, so I won't fear voicing out my grievances," he said. Speaking about the match, the former Manzini Wanderers mentor said his boys did well despite the fact that they were missing some key players. "My boys did well despite the suspensions and injuries. I was also proud of left back Lindokuhle, though it was his first game he stood his ground," he said.

Vilakati also praised his opponents for giving them a good game.

He further said he was worried about the number of draws and has already submitted his wish list to the team's authorities to beef up his squad.

Meanwhile, Moneni Pirates head coach Geina 'Magiyane' Dlamini commended Mbabane Highlanders for their fighting spirit. "Congratulations to Highlanders, they fought very hard today. There is a little bit of improvement in their play, especially in duels," he said. Dlamini added that he was also proud of his goalkeeper Bhekisisa Dlamini and defender Wenzile Lushaba who both made their debuts yesterday. "They did exceptionally well despite the fact that it was their first game," he said. Team captain Menzi Simelane said it was a tough match and acknowledged that it was always hard coming up against Highlanders.